



**BEHIND THE SCENES
WITH THE KAISER**

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE KAISER (1888-1922)

THE TRUE STORY OF THE KAISER
AS HE LIVED, LOVED, PLAYED AND WARRED

BY
THE BARONESS VON LARISCH
OF THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD

VOL. II

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PUBLISHED BY
HERTAG PUBLISHING CORPORATION
NEW YORK

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NEW YORK

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**BEHIND THE SCENES
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CHAPTER X

DURING the war it looked sometimes as if the furies of hate and general contempt were giving William no rest—were lashing him East and West, North and South. He was known to be forever flitting from one battlefield to another, from Schleswig to Hungary and back again. No doubt many of his journeys were dictated by fear; attempts to escape bombing parties, the frowns of the populace, or the wailings of the numerous petty German kings and kinglets who were holding the Hohenzollern responsible for the débâcle in sight.

But glancing at the records, kept by Baroness Von Larisch, we learn that William-Prince-of-Peace, was as much of a travel-maniac as William-who-lifted-the-lid-off-Hell. At one time within the space of a few months, he went to Stockholm and Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Munich, Vienna, Rome, Hamburg, Leipzig, Breslau, Stettin, Buckeburg, Oldenburg, Wilhelmshafen, Schwedt, Weimar, Brunswick, Dresden, Osborne, Sandown Bay, Aldershot, Carlsruhe, Strassburg, Metz, Munster, Minden, Hannover, Schwerin, Athens, Dessau, Darmstadt, Worms, Bremen, Bonigsberg, etc.—altogether stopping and holding court in thirty-seven cities and towns in Germany and abroad, many of which he visited three or four times. And there were hunting trips besides.

To find excuses for this almost perpetual absence from the seat of government, all sorts of excuses are invented by William. He went away “to take a bird’s-eye view of politics, and to come back unbiased by partisan preferences.” If he neglected to look up the King of the Belgians, “our African possessions may suffer;” a month’s sea-voyage afforded the Kaiser a

much-wanted "opportunity for studying his inner man," and who would deny the necessity of such an undertaking?

But the real motive that prompted these journeys was the morbid restlessness of which the Kaiser is possessed, and that scourged him, a crowned Ahasuerus, from town to city, over seas and mountains.

The Kaiser's adjutants, military and civil secretaries, representatives of the various cabinets, body-physicians, valets, wardrobemen, keeper of the silverware, cellarer, master of the horse, coachmen, grooms, mouth-cooks, kitchen employes and the host of chasseurs and flunkies who accompanied him on each trip, were so well trained in handling the endless accessories and baggage, that an order to get ready at an hour's notice neither surprised nor rattled either.

If the tour or outing on which they were about to enter had been under consideration for some time, a printed itinerary was furnished to the chief of each department, but quite frequently no one was able to learn anything beyond the hour of departure.

The Kaiser, you know, addressed his attendants only in monosyllables, and did not even take the trouble to speak distinctly. To ask repetition of a sentence, or to put any question whatever, would have been an unheard-of breach of etiquette, so nothing remained to do but to take chances and work ahead in the dark, the more so, as the adjutants often knew no more of his Majesty's intentions than the small stableboys who went with every imperial party to assist at tennis.

Especial secrecy was observed if the destination was some town or fortress in the far west or east of the Empire, where, after a night of travel, the war-lord intended to mount at five or six o'clock in the morning, and, attended by trumpeters and a formidable suite, ride through the streets alarming the garrison.

If the wardrobe-master on duty suspected that the journey was an errand of that kind, he exhausted every

possible means of solving the mystery, and more than once have I aided the poor fellow by trying to learn from the Empress what was wanted. Sometimes, though, even her Majesty was kept in ignorance.

The wardrobbeman's anxiety will be better understood when I mention that William made it a rule always to wear the uniform of the principal regiment garrisoned in the place visited; the attendant unable to draw from among the baggage the military dress would quickly find himself dropped from the salary list.

When, in addition, it is stated that a cavalry uniform, for instance, consists of fourteen distinct parts, the reader may gain an idea of the work involved by these sudden journeys, for one uniform would of course not do; there must be three or four in reserve, and also civilian and hunting dress.

In a similar predicament as the wardrobbeman was the stable-master. Will an infantry, cavalry or artillery horse be wanted? for his Majesty rode a different breed of animal with each body of troops. Every time information was withheld in the manner described, six horses, two of each kind, must be taken along for his Majesty, besides consignments of carriage-horses and vehicles and numerous mounts for the suite, all of which increased the cost of railway journeying enormously, for, though most of the German railways are property of the state, the Kaiser had to pay mileage when he travelled as a private individual. Still, as his motto was: "I-am-the-state," the state railways derived precious little revenue from William.

The imperial train generally pulled out of the station at ten o'clock at night, as the Kaiser never allowed business to interfere with his own convenience, and, if, for some reason or other, he wanted to rise earlier than usual, he retired soon after supper to make up for time that would be lost. Furthermore, the train must proceed at the slowest possible pace so that the "all-highest's" sleep be not disturbed.

That the salon-train was furnished with all the luxuries imaginable—a rolling palace containing reception, dining, scullery, and stables—need hardly be explained; the only things lacking were accommodations for the servants, who, valet and hostler alike, must sleep in chairs or on the floor.

At five o'clock, or earlier, a cup of tea was served to the monarch, the bath and toilet followed, and then breakfast, which latter was served with much more state and with a greater variety of food than at home. So fortified and refreshed, the Kaiser and his paladins mounted at dawn, and, preceded by buglers, galloped into town "to kill the soldiers' and, incidentally, the citizens' morning sleep."

One of the imperial adjutants described the mode of procedure at the alarming of the garrison of Posen, since become a Polish city once more, as follows:

"During breakfast, and on our ride to the inner town, his Majesty talked of nothing but the 'stupid faces' the commander and officers, suddenly roused from sleep, would make, and drew some rather risqué pictures of the consternation and discomforts bound to follow the signals, so that one of our party remarked: 'These provincial petticoats will not thank your Majesty for making war on them.'"

"'Pshaw!' said the Kaiser, 'what matters that? The devotion of my brave boys in blue, some of whom I will aid to escape without paying their bills, will recompense me for any loss of admiration in those quarters.'"

"By this time we had been admitted, after giving the parole of the day," continued my informant, "and presently our trumpeters' blasts and the sharp clang of our horses' hoofs resounded in the main street. Posen, though only half Polish, has seen so many sieges, insurrections, and kindred revolutionary doings, that warlike activity has no terror for her citizens; a coup

de main in broad daylight would no more disconcert them, I believe, than a good-sized shower.

"Windows were opened and shut as we cantered along, men, women and children in night-dresses casting hasty glances at the strange cavalcade through half-raised Venetian blinds. Now and again a military person, semi-dressed, drew himself up into regulation attitude, hand raised to the side of his head; one might imagine hearing his naked heels click together.

"Proceeding at a rapid rate, we encountered several small troops of soldiers bound for the drill-grounds; but the Kaiser ordered them to fall behind, while their officers gave the report to the adjutants. On Wilhelm Platz the Emperor had the satisfaction of stopping two cavalry horses which, while being saddled, heard the signal and ran off to take their places in array; altogether we made an awful lot of noise and provoked more.

"Meanwhile, we had reached the principal hotel, and there, at one of the upper windows, was a well-known face, adorned by fierce blonde mustachios, peeping out between two lithe figures in white,—the one a popular coryphee of the Berlin Royal Opera House, the other a well known ingenue of one of the leading Berlin theaters.

"‘What do I see?’ cried the Emperor. ‘This looks as if my ballet and player folks had preceded us to Posen.’

"‘It is the first instance that these two branches of art appear on terms of camaraderie,’ remarked Adjutant von Moltke, and everybody laughed.

"The surprised Adonis, Baron von X——, of the Body Hussars, was invited to the Emperor’s circle at the banquet in the officers’ mess that followed the parade, and his Majesty amused himself royally at his expense, as, indeed, he treated the whole expedition as a huge joke, arranged to afford him a novel entertainment."

Travelling was such a mania with the Kaiser, that, when business of state or the fact that there was nobody or nothing to visit forbade his going abroad, he occasionally spent a night in his railway carriage, stalled at Wildpark Station, only five minutes from the Neues Palais, on the plea that on the following morning he must be in Berlin at some unearthly hour.

He indulged in this queer pastime with increasing regularity until one night, when, about to drive to the station from some festivity held at the Marble Palace, the Kaiserin took courage to threaten an invasion of his bachelor quarters, which, she insisted, must possess some special attraction.

As her Majesty was not quite wrong in this, William desisted from following his inclination then and for several months, his compliance being all the more disagreeable to him, as the Empress was in an interesting condition.

But Her Majesty's interference was not only justified, it was likewise well-timed, for just then there was under way a formidable conspiracy among the royal servants, who, underpaid as they were and nourishing a sneaking spirit of insurrection, had conspired to inform a member of the Reichstag opposition of the fact that his Majesty was in the habit of using a public depot for his sleeping apartment.

In that way they expected to get even with William for compelling them to spend so many nights in their clothes. Of course, Parliament has no business to inquire into the sovereign's manner of spending his nights, but the public was doubtless interested in the accompanying circumstance that, when his Majesty chose to repose at Wildpark Station, traffic was seriously interfered with in order that the "all highest" sleep be not disturbed.

"Over a hundred officials and workmen stay awake tonight to facilitate the Kaiser's fad for occupying his car," said Count Eulenburg to me one evening,

when the Kaiser was setting out for his wheeled boudoir.

"Impossible!—a hundred persons?"

"A hundred or more—the lists have gone through my hands. Reflect a moment on the work involved: Freight trains must be sidetracked, and passenger trains are compelled to reduce their speed, while the ordinary signals, steam-whistling and ringing of bells, have to be abandoned, and the number of employes doubled, to forestall mishaps."

If disgruntled servants had told this story to the Socialists, the inevitable discussion might have seriously interfered with the Kaiser's enjoyment of the Wilhelm Canal opening festivities then about to begin.

William stayed at home when there was no one to visit, I said, and may add that willing victims of imperial travelmania grew scarcer year by year. How well I remember the Kaiser's return from his first Northland trip, when he spoke of his visit to Copenhagen, and how he had succeeded in wheedling King Christian and Queen Louise.

"They can be of great service to me with Czar Alexander," he said, "and I promised to stay with them a couple of days every year on my way to or from Northland."

All of us around the royal board, officials and guests, looked at one another in astonishment, for the poverty of the reigning family of Denmark is notorious. Indeed, almost everybody at court had heard the Kaiser, at one time or another, quote Field Marshal Count Moltke's observation in one of his letters to his brother Adolph:

"Poor King of Denmark: The founder of a new dynasty, he began his reign by losing one-half of the realm! Sweeping reductions were inevitable, indeed, it is doubtful if this state can continue to exist as an independent kingdom."

Besides, it was an open secret that the Czar, when

visiting his father-in-law, paid for his accommodations like the millionaire he was,—for his and for that of all his relatives making Denmark their summer home, and rejoicing in the annual family reunions. The Kaiser knew that; he had even obtained a corroboration of the story in Stockholm, as it turned out by and by; was he, then, determined to become one of the Czar's pensioners, or did he not care whether he embarrassed his venerable brother of Denmark, half of whose inheritance Prussia had swallowed up?

Reference to the minutes of the journey reveal the fact that at the state dinner in Castle Amalienborg, the Kaiser, answering King Christian's toast, literally said: "I submit my sincerest thanks for your Majesty's welcome, and hope that I may be permitted to visit your Majesty frequently in the same way."

It was the last toast spoken that evening, and the members of the Kaiser's suite do not know whether the implied question was honored by an invitation in private. Certain it is, however, that his Majesty had no further occasion "to eat the Danes out of house and home," for, although the court of Copenhagen was annually advised of his Majesty's contemplated northern trips, it always acknowledged the notification in such cold terms that any wish to follow it up by a promise to call and take pot-luck was forestalled.

After the bustle occasioned by Wilhelm's preparations for travel, life in the Neues Palais, which was never brilliant, but often spectacular, became duller and more insipid than ever. Entertainments were completely abandoned and economy was the word heard on every side. The court and house marshals gave strict orders that expenses be cut all round; a number of the servants were shipped to Berlin, so that their board wages, to which they were entitled while in Potsdam, might be saved; only flowers from the royal gardens dared be used for decoration, while great loads were bought from different surveyors during the Kaiser's

residence at home, and, finally, the expenses of the kitchen were reduced two-thirds, because the Empress took meals privately with the children.

But the Kaiser, sometimes all of a sudden, burst anew into the midst of our humdrum existence, having left his friends abruptly, or his business unfinished; occasionally, it was said, press criticism brought him back earlier than anticipated. Hence he employed a day or so dispatching the most urgent affairs of state, and immediately set the ball of courtly entertainments rolling. He would order a dinner of a hundred covers or more for next day, and again, while that was in progress, invite his guests, or part of them, to accompany him on a yachting expedition on the Havel lakes.

Gun-charger Rieger, who, in his gold-embroidered dress, stood behind the Kaiser's chair on festive occasions, often conveyed a brief command of that kind to the house marshal on duty in this fashion: "His Majesty's yacht *Alexandra* and so and so many auxiliary yachts must be ready at such and such an hour,"—usually at four or five, if the meal began between one and two.

To execute this imperial wish, telegraph, telephone, and mounted messengers were plentifully employed in an effort to drum together officers and crew, hire vessels, and secure a band. Furthermore the personnel of the coffee and tea kitchen and confectionery had to be sent to the steamer with their outfit, for each of the five meals to which their Majesties were accustomed must be served punctually.

Promptly at the hour named, the marshal on duty "submitted" that carriages were waiting to bring their Majesties and the company to the embarking-place, and, before the vessel left, the official took heart to ask his master where he commanded that supper shall be served.

Maybe his Majesty answered, carelessly: "Pfauen Insel," or, "Park of the Marble Palace," "at eight."

The first is a small wooded island in the Havel, containing a semi-furnished royal villa that affords a certain amount of space, but little else, for the accommodation of guests. The castellan of the place selected for the invasion was now hurriedly informed, and the stable-master set about getting ready ten or more so-called kitchen vans to transport all that was necessary; refrigerators and hot-closets, table-linen, basketfuls of silver and plate, china and crystal, wines, meats, vegetables and delicacies, lamps and candelabra, and a thousand and one accessories.

All these things were under the care of certain officials and servants, and, the staff being thoroughly organized, the whole train was equipped in an incredibly short while and started for its destination, the court marshal following in his carriage to superintend the arrangements *nota bene* if the Kaiser had not meanwhile made up his mind to go elsewhere.

For the places of rendezvous were changed with alarming frequency, and before a cavalcade started for a certain castle or park, the men usually offered to lay wages that upon their arrival they would find a telegram ordering supper in some other lodge or villa, or on the borders of some lake five or ten miles to the south, or east, or west, as the case might be.

Once they were chased in this manner from Charlotten Hof to Wildpark, and from there to the Entenfang, far out in the royal hunting grounds. The Entenfang is a romantic spot, such as young lovers might select for a picnic; but imagine the tumult and work which the impromptu establishment of a royal table of from twenty to one hundred covers must occasion, when the nearest castle or royal villa is ten miles off.

The vans had to be sent back to the Neues Palais for tables, chairs, carpets and a little tent for the toilet, while the nearest military post furnished field cooking-apparatus, and a dozen or more horses were

driven lame travelling to and fro with heavy loads. The damage caused on occasions like this by broken crockery, crystal and ruined furniture also reached a high figure.

Foreign visitors at our court frequently wondered how it was possible for one man to give employment to three hundred and fifty horses in driving and riding, as the Emperor did. The story of these whimsical excursions explains that point, for, aside from the horses needed for the service, carriages (or motor cars), must be sent to fetch their Majesties and suite and company from some distant place, perhaps, while others were collecting the ladies and gentlemen in Potsdam and neighborhood, or from incoming trains, who had been "commanded" to be present at supper at some place where at the time stipulated no sign of life existed.

At twelve or one o'clock in the morning, when the imperial master, his titled suite and his friends, had forgotten, in several hours' sleep, all about the forty-five minutes of entertainment that kept a small army of men, women and beasts on the run since lunch, the vans and carry-alls returned to the palace, often awakening many a noble lord and lady who wondered that any living creature dared disturb their august slumber.

When the Kaiser was at home, his conversation perpetually turned on the subject of future outings, and his secretaries and adjutants were kept busy scouring the papers for items that promised excuses for a visit to one place or another.

As soon as an opening was discovered, the court marshal must find ways and means to secure an invitation for the Kaiser, and to that end either the military authorities, the chief of county or some prince or aristocrat living in the neighborhood, received instructions, which in many cases were most eagerly followed, for William's presence in any place, not his capital, was a guarantee for no end of advertisement. Some-

times, though, it was quite difficult to persuade the municipal authorities, the worthy men being afraid of the cost of the undertaking.

If neither cities nor country districts, neither the North German Lloyd nor the Hamburg Line, neither the shipyards nor yacht or hunting clubs at home or abroad, held out allurements, the Kaiser, quickly resolved, made opportunities for travel or display.

He observed, for instance, that it was so and so many years since the ——— Regiment received an honored flag.

"Let's grant it a new set of colors," said William, and presently parades, religious ceremonies, speechifying, dinners and tattoos were in the air. Or, all regiments being provided with flags, his Majesty felt "graciously pleased" to bestow on one or another "ensign ribbons," an act yielding as much in the way of spectacular splendor as the other.

When we went to Rome the King of Italy said the Kaiser's train of eighty people reminded him of the deluge; but our three days' stay at Hanover cost nearly half as much as the tour in the Peninsula; one-third of that amount was expended for carpets and rugs. The royal castles, you must know, are empty barns for the most part, and whenever either of the Majesties visited the residences in Breslau, Königsberg, Cassel, Wiesbaden, Hamburg, and Stettin, or when William went to his various hunting-boxes, whole carloads of furniture, pictures, decorative material, and all the necessary silver, linen and kitchen utensils must be sent ahead, together with a full force of servants, horses and carriages, food and forage.

Fancy, then, the tumult occasioned by the meeting between the Romanoffs and Hohenzollerns in the capital of Silesia, when two palaces had to be furnished from top to bottom! The robbing of Peter to pay Paul was almost pitiful to behold; my mistress actually had to give up her favorite damask curtains, which she

bought out of her own money for Wilhelmshohe, to garnish the connubial couch of Nicholas and Alix, while she herself had to sleep in a bed once occupied by the plebeian King Jerome, brought on from Cassel.

The pieces de resistance in the home improvised for their Russian Majesties in Breslau were taken from the consignment of Empire furniture, which one of the electors of Hesse bought in Paris some fifty years ago and for which payment was refused. His Royal Highness's Diet had to liquidate the bill in the end, and when the Prussians annexed the country, they promptly seized the furniture as the country's own.

CHAPTER XI

THE low grade of intelligence which ruled the imperial court of Germany despite its much advertised "kultur" is glowingly set forth in these records of Berlin court life as Baroness Larisch saw and superintended it.

Although very partial to splendor and festivities, the Kaiser hated nothing more than the fetes which etiquette compelled him to give annually in the Berlin *Schloss*. He hated them principally because that magnificent pile, so formidable from the outside, being designed for Brandenburg society at the beginning of the eighteenth century, was entirely inadequate to accommodate the many thousands privileged nowadays to dance, eat and drink with Wilhelm.

Of course there was always room for the "All-highest," no matter if his company be packed like sardines. The discomfort of his guests was no concern of his, but the ocular demonstration of the unsuitableness of his house hurt his tender feelings. It sorely aggravated him to be reminded of the fact that he was not rich enough to build reception-rooms equal to the demands of the times.

"If my ancestors could afford to construct this castle, why should not I erect one suitable to my requirements?" he argued, forgetting the fact that not the Hohenzollerns, but the Prussian people, paid for the *Schloss* and were all but bankrupted in doing so. The builders, Elector Frederick and the first two Kings of Prussia, promised to pay back the millions wrung from their pockets—when their alchemist should succeed in making yellow metal.

The castle was finished under false pretense, and the

lying necromancer was hanged, which proves that the big pile, commonly believed to be the Hohenzollerns' private property, may be seized and sold for the benefit of the allied governments. It might be turned into a first-class hotel or factory—a point worth remembering.

The winter fetes at our court were institutions in their way, the splendor of which the Kaiser's favor or disfavor might enhance or reduce, but even his enmity could not blot them out.

To do that would seem too much like breaking with time-honored customs and taking away the perquisites of two mighty classes: the trades-peoples' profits, and the aristocracy's chief opportunity for disporting its few remaining hereditary privileges. Only in case of court mourning, or great national disasters, may the fetes be curtailed, and never was a king more eager to take advantage of such an excuse than William.

When his granduncle, Prince Alexander, died, his first words were: "Now we may rid ourselves of the company of the sweet plebs, for this winter at least," and the grand-master was straightway ordered to recall the invitations for carnival.

Yet one cannot mourn a relative of the seventh or eighth degree forever, and the Kaiser all the more readily consented to give one ball before the end of the season, as the municipal council of Berlin at that time was particularly obstreperous, and as it was expected that by a lavish expenditure of money flowing into the people's coffers its good offices could be gained.

So, when almost everybody had given up the hope of dancing and supping "at Kaiser's," several thousand ladies and gentlemen were made happy by receiving the coveted "commands."

I don't deny that the average Berlin-bred man or woman is more fit for a Third Avenue speak-easy than a Fifth Avenue parlor, but behold their master, the "All-highest." It was rather noticeable when the tone of

his conversation with German subjects, both women and men, did not smack of the tap-room.

Once, while Wilhelm was entertaining a young unmarried countess at a hunt-dinner, I heard him insinuate, on an innocent remark dropped by the girl, a double entendre which I should blush to repeat to my mistress, if I were a man. And to make it worse, he insisted upon reiterating the offensive interpretation over and over again to the young lady's utmost chagrin. And that happened in the house of his best friend.

Madame von Scholl, wife of the imperial adjutant-general, was on very familiar terms with William; she was jolly and good looking, fat and over forty.

Born in Southern Germany, Madame was not hampered by that punctiliousness and the conventional scruples which make the Prussian lady of quality so detestable and the most scandalous thing she ever did was stamped with the all-highest approval.

The scene of Madame von Scholl's assault upon the proprieties was a hill near Havel lake, whither we had gone on the royal yacht *Alexandra* to spend the afternoon. It was broiling hot and as we crept toward the near-by forest, only an occasional word was spoken.

The Kaiser looked as if he wished himself a hundred miles away, and the Empress was unhappy because her lord seemed displeased.

Suddenly there arose the cry: "Where is Madame von Scholl? Did we leave her on the steamer?"—No. Some one had seen her at the landing-place.

While these questions went the rounds, we heard sharp whistling somewhere from above, and there, on the top of the sand-hill, stood madame, swinging her parasol, and turning as swiftly on one brown-stockinged foot as her ponderous weight permitted.

"The fat rascal!" cried William, "she must have sneaked off the pier and ascended the mountain from the other side."

Then the Kaiser put his hands to his mouth and hallooed: "Stand still a second and give me a chance to fix my camera."

But at that moment, the parasol and head and arms of the unhappy lady suddenly took a forward tumble, the rest of her body followed, and, twice overturning, she rolled down the incline like an avalanche streaked with brown tints and festooned with multicolored ribbons.

Did the "all-highest" and their excellencies and ladyships and colonelships and privy councilors and learned men and common every-day noblemen laugh?

Oh, no! They just roared and bellowed and shouted and held their sides and danced about, and some of us shed tears at the hilarious spectacle; and when we had disentangled our portly friend, she started in to enjoy the situation herself and we had to commence all over again to keep her company.

Still, as to downright indecencies, openly practiced, our court was hardly a patch on that of Dessau, which explains Wilhelm's frequent visits to the little Duchy, whose women enjoyed a well-earned reputation for gayety.

At one time when my mistress learned of the Kaiser's projected visit to that Sodom, she set to work to procure an invitation for herself. This was easily arranged through the Princess Frederick Charles, sister of the Duke, but for quite a while his Majesty remained deaf to his wife's hints and even to direct requests to take her along. Finally, when Augusta Victoria asked him in the presence of his aunt, he had to yield, and the Kaiserin ordered a number of fine dresses. If the Dessau ladies were as handsome as her husband claimed, she meant to dazzle them, at least, by gorgeousness.

Two days before the Imperial couple was to start, the Empress caught a slight cold, but nobody thought anything of it, though William remarked once or twice

at table: "You had better look out, Dona, or maybe you cannot go."

Her Majesty laughed at this, and there were most elaborate preparations: She was to have a special car, and everything was to be done on the grandest scale.

Countess Brockdorff and myself had been ordered to accompany the Kaiserin, and early on the morning our trunks (two truck-loads for a two-days' visit) were carted away to the depot.

At ten o'clock we all partook of a hurried second breakfast in travelling dress, and that over, her Excellency received orders to drive ahead to the station, to inspect for the last time the apartment on the train, while I went to fetch the children who were to say good-bye. Returning with the pretty youngsters, I found my mistress ready, when Dr. Leuthold, the Kaiser's physician-general, entered.

"If it pleases your Majesty," he said, "let me see your tongue. I will also have to examine your jugular glands once more."

"Nonsense," said the Empress, but at the same time raised her veil and stuck out her tongue. After a momentary examination, the physician pulled a long face.

"Thank God," he said, "it is not yet too late."

"No, but it will be, if you do not hurry," interrupted the Crown Prince. "Papa will be here presently."

Dr. Leuthold took no notice of the child's joke. "I perceive indications of an inflamed throat that may bring on most serious complications," he resumed, gravely. "Your Majesty must go to bed at once, and must not leave the house for three days. In this way the worst may be forestalled."

"Then I am not going to Dessau?" gasped Augusta Victoria.

"I cannot permit it," answered Leuthold.

The Empress dropped into an arm chair and began to cry.

"Is my wife ready?" demanded the Kaiser's voice

outside. I advanced toward him. "Has Leuthold given an adverse decision?" he asked, before I had time to explain. His valet entered simultaneously to announce that the carriage was waiting.

"I am sorry," said the Emperor, stepping up to the Kaiserin and kissing her hand, "but you know one cannot be too careful of one's throat." Then he bade her and the children good-bye, and, turning once more at the door, cried: "I will send back your Brockdorff. She shall keep you company."

"It was all a deep-laid plot, a conspiracy," said her Excellency, afterward. "When I arrived at the train, the Kaiser's attendants exchanged side glances which convinced me that something was up, and when he came and told me to return home, I discovered that our trunks were already on the wagons bound for the *Schloss*. That shows they had never been freighted."

I remarked I did not believe William capable of such trickery.

"Bah!" growled the Countess, "you may take my word for it, the Kaiser did not want us in Dessau."

"Not us, perhaps, but his own wife——"

The old Excellency shrugged her shoulders.

"And Leuthold?"

"Is a man, and in such affairs men stick to each other like glue. This amiable physician-general was given to understand that the Kaiser intended the trip for a stag party. Hence the examination at the hour of leaving, the awe-inspiring prophecies, and the disheartening verdict."

The Dessau incident happened previous to the great holocaust of favorites alluded to, and at a time when my mistress was almost continuously in a sore state of agitation lest she should lose her husband's love. Sometimes she chased after him for days, following his Restlessness to Berlin, or to various hunting-boxes in the neighborhood, and we ladies had to be prepared to spend the nights on the cars, or in the half-finished

chambers of palaces wet with paint and smelling of work-people.

When the Empress said: "I will give audiences in Berlin tomorrow," it probably meant that she had learned of his Majesty's resolve to leave her for a while and enjoy himself after his own fashion. But the reception accorded to our mistress, after we had caught up with the imperial runaway, was often far from pleasant. When surprised in Berlin, the Emperor sometimes bolted as early as four or five o'clock in the morning to go on some impromptu hunting expedition, hasty preparations for which had been made overnight.

Augusta Victoria would then receive a few notables at ten in the forenoon, returning to Potsdam for lunch, and, perhaps, take another train for Berlin in the evening.

Once the Kaiser vamosed from Hubertusstock, whither we had followed him unbidden. Going out hunting with his gentlemen at early morn, he sent, at supper-time, when her Majesty was expecting him, a dispatch saying that business of state had called him to the capital.

All this plotting and counterplotting, the outcome of jealousy, was ridiculous, wearisome, exhausting—but tame.

More interesting became the matter when a royal woman happened to be in the race, Letitia Bonaparte, Duchess of Aosta, the daughter of the late Plon-Plon, and her father's true child, for instance.

Poor Augusta Victoria! if she could have anticipated the sorry consequences of her good-natured decision to lodge the former King of Spain and his blooming young wife in the Princess' chambers when they came to Berlin!

The Princess' chambers are on the same floors and in the same wing of the *Schloss* as their Majesties' own private rooms. The occupants of both apartments are therefore much thrown together,—in fact, they can-

not help being in each other's company at all times of the day.

William had so impressed his wife with the imperative of strengthening his relations with the then King of Italy, Umberto, that Augusta Victoria could scarcely do enough for her new friends. So she gave them the apartment reserved for the most intimate relatives, one which even Prince Henry, the Kaiser's brother, had never been allowed to occupy.

(In the early weeks of December, 1918, Rosa Luxemburg, the Anarchist, occupied the same apartments, while Liebknecht lived across the way, in the Kaiser's own suite of rooms.)

At the time of this royal visit, the Duchess of Aosta was twenty-two years old. Her Majesty was thirty-one, the Duke forty-four, and the Kaiser thirty years;—these figures tell the story. Letitia would not have been the daughter of Plon-Plon—had she not preferred the imperial blonde of thirty to her swarthy husband, twice her age. And under the influence of his young guest, William remembered all of a sudden that his wife was older than himself.

I am writing of things I have seen, and conjectures are odious where a woman is concerned; but to complete my story it is necessary to say that the Duke and Duchess left our court abruptly, ten hours before the stipulated time, and that the Duchess never obtained another invitation to our court.

True, she visited Berlin once more, but she travelled incognito then, which was the best thing she could do, considering that Augusta Victoria had refused to receive her. Besides, she came as a petitioner. The Kaiser was to intervene on her behalf with King Umberto, who had cut off her allowance and had refused to invite her to his silver wedding.

Letitia and William met. "Madonna, your every wish is a command," and forthwith a cipher dispatch to the King of Italy, couched in the most amiable terms,

issued from the German foreign office. It is further claimed that they agreed to meet two weeks hence, in Rome; but the same day the Empress got wind of the arrangement by one of those infernal anonymous letters.

So Umberto refused and ordered his Berlin Ambassador to conduct the Aosta to St. Moritz. That closed the romance of William and Letitia.

Among many other court functions I especially recall, the "all-highest" revel in the hunting-lodge Grunewald, which led to the succession of horrible anonymous letters. It took place in the early winter, when my mistress, who had given life to Princess Victoria Louise in the middle of September, was not yet able to ride to the chase.

In vain had Augusta Victoria pleaded postponement until she were stronger and able to attend; "all the invitations were issued;" "Count Philli could not come at a later time, his duties not permitting him to leave Vienna after the date fixed;" besides, later on, he, the Kaiser, "had to prepare for the formal opening of the Reichstag," etc.

I had been one of the red-coats at the annual Hubertus hunt and my report had pleased my mistress. The Countess Hohenau had been there, but rode her horse womanfashion, and returned, like the other ladies, to Potsdam shortly after the boar was brought down.

"You are sure she did not go back to the châlet, to participate in the dinner, by another route?" inquired her Majesty.

"I ordered my coachman to keep behind her Ladyship's carriage, and, though she drove furiously, the command was strictly followed. I saw the Countess' phaeton turn into the courtyard of her villa, and up to ten minutes ago, she did not leave the house. I put a man on watch there now, according to your Majesty's orders."

My mistress had grown very red in the face.

"I see your zeal has led you too far," she said, coldly; "but as your friend, Madame von N——, lives near the Hohenaus, drive to her on some pretext and call off your spy."

At the Hubertus dinner two hundred and twenty-five covers were laid; the company at the lodge two weeks later was much more limited,—five or six ladies and some twenty gentlemen,—among them the Duke of Schleswig, Prince George Radziwill, the Eulenburgs, Philip and Augustus; Generals von Hahncke, von Plessen, and von Scholl, Adjutant von Huelsen, and the Masters of Ceremony, Herr von Kotze and Baron Schrader.

Our rubicund friend, Madame von Scholl, did the honors. There were, besides her and Countess Fritz, several friends of Duke Gunther, who had not been met in society before. All I know about them is that they responded to the names of French marquises and wore an astonishing number of lace petticoats.

"Philli never sang better, and Huelsen fairly outdid himself in his capacity as court jester; those French dames, too, danced enchantingly on a marble-topped table," said one of the guests; "but the Kaiser, though applauding his friends' efforts, seemed absent-minded. During the whole of the evening he sat at the side of Countess Fritz, who was arrayed in a coquettish demi-toilet of white and purple velvet. One of her superb arms leaned upon the Kaiser's fauteuil, and he fondled her hands."

Toward midnight, Kotze, good-natured fool that he is (if it meant death to him he would still be the best person in the world to intrust with a commission concerning the King's pleasure), Kotze, I said, proposed that all go spook-hunting.

"Mon Dieu!" cried the French women, "is there a White Lady about this castle, too?"

And then Duke Gunther told the story of the beautiful cannon-founder's wife, whom Margrave Joachim's

princess caused to be immured on the staircase leading from her husband's room in the first story to the cellar.

The cruel deed is said to have occurred about 1545, and the walled-up entrance to the staircase can still be seen. There are even many who think they can hear the poor, starved wench moaning in her centuries-old burial-place.

To investigate this, Kotze proposed that we adjourn to the Joachim wing. We did so with many affectations of chicken-heartedness, and when we returned and counted noses, there were two missing.

As it turned out, the Kaiser had a sleigh ready all evening, the horses being changed hourly, and as soon as the company left the parlors, the Kaiser and Countess Fritz jumped in, and, outriders with torches having been sent ahead, drove to Potsdam, Charlotte handling the ribbons.

Grand-master Eulenburg was, of course, supposed to know nothing of this, but, being responsible for the Kaiser's person, he had arranged for a second sleigh, with the fastest team from the imperial stables, to follow the other at a moment's notice. Its occupants, an expert driver and a valet, were to keep behind the Kaiser without making their presence known.

When we learned of these precautionary measures, a load came off our minds, and particularly the news that her Ladyship was driving gave us relief, for everybody remembered the many narrow escapes Wilhelm has had when acting as his own coachman.

Toward five o'clock in the morning the driver and valet returned, announcing that "Majesty was safe."

And further this witness sayeth not, but next day, at noon, when the valet brought Augusta Victoria's mail, I noticed among the letters an envelope without initials or seal. This was most unusual. Ordinarily, letters of royalty, and of friends only, were submitted to my mistress in person, Baron von Mirbach, the same who

was murdered in Moscow in 1918, taking care of all others, as the majority were merely petitions.

Examining the envelope still closer, I saw that the ceremonious address was written in Latin letters and in imitation of print. However, despite my misgivings, I had to lay the missive before the Empress.

I put the mail on a silver tray and ordered the footman to carry it into the library, where I preceded him to hand the letters to her Majesty, who was sitting at her writing-table. By a strange coincidence, the Kaiserin espied the queer envelope at once; while I was giving her the letters with such remarks as "from her Majesty, Queen Victoria;" "from her Highness, the Duchess of Glucksburg;" "from Princess Feo;" "from ——" Augusta Victoria interrupted me.

"What is in that queer envelope,—the last of the lot?" she inquired.

"I do not know. Some official business, I suppose, sent up by mistake."

"Give it to me, Baroness."

And with that impulsiveness that sometimes urges us on to hasten to our doom, her Majesty tore open the cover.

I am no prude, but the picture that dropped from the envelope was so grossly indecent I hesitate to even hint at the subject. I'll only say that there were two figures, scantily draped in fur robes,—that of the female, bearing on her shoulders the photographed head of Countess Hohenau, and that of the man exhibiting William's features.

The Kaiserin scanned the caricature with a horrified expression; then, bewildered, disgusted, helpless, stared at me. I tried to take the picture and letter away from her.

"Let me throw these things into the fire," I pleaded. Instead of answering, her Majesty ordered Countess Brockdorff to be sent for. "I must see her Excellency

at once. I am at home to no one. The Princess must not come in."

Returning, Augusta Victoria drew me down upon the sofa next to her. "Read me that letter," she said, "my eyes hurt." She was crying.

"Loloki and Lotka on a moonlight night," began the epistle, which purported to tell the incidents of the night at Grunewald and of William's (Loloki's) sleigh-ride with Charlotte (Lotka), Countess Hohenau. * * * * After reading aloud the first two lines, I refused to proceed, and as to my relief, Countess Brockdorff entered just then, I handed the rag to her, but unprepared as her Excellency was, the introduction upset her. "I beg to be ex——"

"No excuses, please," said her Majesty; "you will read this letter to the end. I must have it,—word for word."

A stubborn mien had overspread the Kaiserin's face. Theresa Brockdorff saw that it would be useless to temporize. She did as she was told. Shades of Queen Bess and DuBarry, of the Duchess of Orleans and Lola Montez!

It was a dreadful ordeal, this reading of anonymous letter number one; and as we were in the midst of it the door opened and in walked Wilhelm, deadly pale, holding in his hand an envelope of the same size and similarly inscribed as the one that brought her Majesty's letter.

Countess Brockdorff and myself rose to withdraw, but the Kaiser stopped us.

"Stay," he shouted, "my wife may need you after I have shown her this," and he threw the envelope on the table. Our mistress gave it a frightened look.

"The same as my own!" she gasped. You may imagine the explanations that followed: William's ravings, his vows of vengeance, Augusta Victoria's hysterics, her tears and noble declamations of unshakable trust in her beloved husband's fidelity.

"And the best of it was," said the Kaiser's sister, the Princess of Meiningen, after things had settled down a bit, "my big brother totally escaped censure for his escapade. In the act of whitewashing him of the terrible accusations, launched forth in the Billingsgate of the mess-room, the facts underlying the whole business were lost sight of."

So entirely were they forgotten that, indeed, the relations between the Emperor and Countess Hohenau and his other favorites continued undisturbed for the next two years.

During all that time a thousand and more letters of the character described were delivered at the homes of Berlin and Potsdam uppertendom; from Kaiser to clubman, from the first lady in the land to the last of court society women, nobody, who was anybody, was spared.

The letters came through the ordinary mail, at all hours of the day and evening, postmarked now from this, now from that quarter of the capital or town, and always announcing their damnable character by the letter style adopted. The carrier that brought them, the lackey or maid receiving them from his hands, recognized the Cain's brand as readily as the quick-witted soubrette taking the note to her trembling mistress, or the major-domo, the chamberlain, or lady-in-waiting performing that disagreeable duty.

The only handsome woman the anonymous letters did not frighten from court was the Countess Sophie Schiltz de Gortz, a beautiful South American, born on an estate near Paris while her father was on a diplomatic mission in Europe.

I have already recorded the Kaiser's opinion of her Ladyship: "So beautiful a woman can hardly be expected to have sense too." During her annual visits at court, he treated her with cold courtesy, and was so little inclined to grant her a friend's privileges, that on one occasion she was forbidden the royal table for

three days—that is, until her court dresses, lost in a railroad smash-up, had been replaced. Despite the Empress's entreaties, the Kaiser would not hear of the least deviation from etiquette in favor of the unlucky dame.

Among the ever recurring themes discussed in the numerous rags was the Kaiser's meanness. He was told over and over again that, while fifty years ago, Karl of Prussia was known as Thaler-Prinz, the Kaiser would be remembered as "Mark—(25 cents) Prince."

Those stories of a king's ransom that "he ties in diamonds, round his mistress's white neck" are inventions, and not particularly original ones, either. Though indulging in the greatest extravagances where his own self is concerned, the egotism that rules his every act probably persuades him that his friends ought to consider the honor of the attention of an Imperial Majesty as an offset against disappointments of a financial nature.

Speaking of diamonds, the Duke of Schleswig showed me a specimen bracelet of the sort the Emperor occasionally gives to a friend. A pretty Potsdam girl had lent it to him in a burst of confidence. It was a gold snake bracelet, elaborately chased, with eyes of sapphires, and six or seven circles.

"Not worth much, but of good workmanship," said the Prince. "See, it can be drawn out and spread from wrist to elbow, or over the upper part of the arm."

As the average great man is rather a nincompoop in his valet's eyes, so the mighty Kaiser appeared a wee small potato to those of his subjects who saw much of him, that is, those permitted to penetrate the mask of imperial pretense, limitless conceit and lying subterfuge he habitually wore.

The Princess of Meiningen hit the nail on the head when she pronounced her "big brother" a "great charlatan."

CHAPTER XII

I HAVE sometimes hinted that the imperial German court was "financially embarrassed." I will show that the Kaiser was both miserly in petty matters, and an uncontrollable spendthrift. He was "penny wise and pound foolish"; he "robbed Peter to pay Paul"; he was stingy with his friends and luxurious with himself. He was niggardly with his family and extravagant where his own wishes were concerned.

I will show that at times he kept the court in downright poverty; his servants in actual want; and his own family "scrimped."

His was a strange mixture of personalities, indeed—the little man whose ambition and greed led him to attempt to conquer the world.

"But how is it possible?" asks the reader whose "Statesman's Year-Book" tells him that the Kaiser has an income of about four million dollars per year, and who remembers, perchance, William's boastful speech in which he said he was the biggest landowner in Germany.

Whether the latter assertion is true I cannot say, but those four millions were a shining reality and unencumbered, save for the obligation to pay five appanages of fifteen thousand dollars each per annum to Prussian Princes. That left William about three million nine hundred thousand dollars a year to "bless himself with," besides his private income of fifty thousand dollars per month.

The \$50,000 formed the nucleus of his Majesty's private purse, and were always spoken for three months in advance for his uniform and toilet accounts, his private journeys and amusements.

The civil list discharged the cost of representation,

the needs of the Kaiserin and the children, all the expenses of the household and provided funds for the maintenance of the royal theaters, palaces and gardens.

Out of a much smaller official income William I saved an immense fortune, though he kept up a separate court for his Queen for thirty years, and, for a Prussian, was exceedingly liberal toward ladies that engaged his fancy.

The present Kaiser actually wound up year after year with a tremendous deficit, and his court, outwardly splendid and richly endowed, was more penurious than that of the meanest prince of the Empire.

Indeed, my maid assured me that at Buckeburg, where the monarch received only as many marks as the president of the United States gets dollars per year, the grooms were better fed and lodged than under-stewards in Potsdam.

The reason for this is obvious enough: the Kaiser has no conception whatever of the value of money, and ordered for himself anything that pleased him, what he saw and read about, without paying the least heed to the pecuniary consequences. If he desired an article, it must be procured in the quickest possible manner.

With the Empress, things were much the same, though she did sometimes listen to reason when the court or house marshals pleaded povety on account of imperial raids on their treasuries.

The entire civil list was kept at the disposal of these two august personages, and all the members of the royal household, as well as purveyors, servants, laborers and scrubwomen, suffered in consequence—a state of affairs that led to constant friction among the court officials, enforced a most niggardly and disgraceful general regimen, and discredited the Kaiser's name with merchants and everybody else having business with the court.

I had noticed for some time that a certain dealer in flowers, Unter den Linden, served me with excessive zeal, though my purchases were not extensive by any

means. My carriage no sooner stopped at his door, when this man rushed out bowing and scraping, and adding to my titles some I never dared hope to acquire. I also observed that he charged me less than the prices marked. So one day I asked him why: "Your Ladyship belongs to the court."

"But," I said, "others do, and I have seen the carriage of the Countess von B—— halt a considerable time in front of your store before one of the employes came to ask her pleasure."

"Well," said the florist, "you belong to the court and pay cash. For that reason I would rather sell you a three-mark bouquet than a fifty-mark flower-piece to the lady you mention or (and he lowered his voice) to even the Emperor or Empress."

"I am a well-to-do man, thank the Lord; but when it comes to waiting a year and a half before one's bills are paid by the royal treasury, I feel like cursing my appointment. And the worst of it is, the all-highest example is followed by almost everybody connected with the court."

But nothing illustrates the unsettled state of the royal finances more thoroughly than the fact that the Kaiserin had no certain income of her own. Her court marshal was obliged to fight for every dollar required beyond the ordinary pay of servants and help with the Kaiser's court and house marshals, who often refused to grant necessary funds until Augusta Victoria's express commands compelled them to honor the disputed bills.

A rather amusing incident of that sort happened a few months after the enthronization, when my mistress ordered me to buy a little bed, together with the necessary clothes, for Prince Oscar (born July 27 that year). It was my good fortune to find at Mosse Brothers, Jaeger Strasse, the exact article her Majesty wanted, and when the bed was sent up she was greatly pleased.

"We will keep it right here," she said, "and, that there may be no misunderstanding, take the bill and order it paid immediately."

"And since when are ladies of the court authorized to make purchases without previous estimate by this office?" asked the Baron, after listening to my request.

"I don't know," I answered, "and, besides, I have not come here to answer riddles."

"Then," said the house marshal icily, "accept my compliments, together with the information that this bill is irregular, extravagant and unnecessary; hence it will not be paid. The baby can sleep in his cradle six months longer; by that time we shall be able to buy him a bed in the regular way."

"Then it is your pleasure that the little Prince be taken out of the new bed and put back into the cradle?"

"It will do him no harm, and give me much satisfaction."

Of course, I reported the case to my mistress, word for word, and such a hubbub as ensued you would deem impossible in the "highest" walks of life. At first, the Kaiserin intended personally to give the Baron a piece of her mind, but that plan was discarded as doing too much honor to the official; then the grandmistress, Countess Brockdorff, was ordered to write him a letter, demanding payment of the bill, and upon his reiterated refusal the information was sprung upon him that he had been making war upon the Empress herself, instead of her ladies, as he thought.

Of course, that altered the case. Baron Lyncker's drawer was all at once alive with crisp blue bills, and there was no higher pleasure for him in the wide, wide world than to discharge obligations for the "all-highest children." As to his remarks that the cradle was good enough for the baby, they were mere pleasantries, and he was "amazed that I had taken them for anything else," etc.

This matter of finance and business is clearly a de-

iciency in William's mental makeup: as some people lack the sense of locality, so the Emperor happens to be destitute of a proper comprehension of values.

Units or tens, three, seven or eight naughts:—William saw no distinction between them. Prince Stolberg tried to make him understand "that the Reichstag people deal with millions, while we at court must be content with using tens and hundreds of thousands, if it comes high," but it was a mere waste of breath.

Maybe that explains, in part, at least, the Kaiser's callousness in the matter of German casualties during the Great War. When Ludendorff explained to him that his projected July offensive would cost a million German lives at the very least, William said: "Go ahead," with no more emotion than he might display when he ordered his bath.

And this recalls an experience had by a relative of the editor of these memoirs. When Napoleon arrived at Dresden after the retreat from Moscow, Mr. Fisher's grandfather, the Comte de Simeon, prime minister of Jerome Napoleon, went to the capital of Saxony to confer with the great Emperor.

As de Simeon entered Napoleon's room, the Emperor grabbed him by the coat and said:

"Off with you to Paris. I want 325,000 men within the next six weeks. You arrange that."

De Simeon tried to protest: "But your Majesty has just lost a million men."

"A million men—this for your million men," cried Napoleon, and, snapping his fingers, he pushed de Simeon out of the door bidding him not to lose a moment.

Every courtier not a dyed-in-the-wool Prussian sympathized with our servants, whose lives, though spent in a palace, were harder in many respects than those of the general run of people in their class. In their gorgeous liveries and tidy house dresses they looked suave and contented enough, but their lot was not as

happy as their serene faces indicated, neither did their wages correspond with their silver-edged clothes of fine material.

Off and on I heard of cases of poverty, even of destitution, in their families, for which they dared not ask for relief in the most likely place, of their master or mistress, who caused it to be known once and for all that they must not be annoyed with their servants' personal concerns.

In the bountiful Christmas season, I thought surely, their Majesties will make up for it. Picture, then, my amazement when I heard the Kaiser say to her Majesty, at the beginning of Holy Week: "I have cautioned Miessner (a privy councilor, who administered the royal purse) to pay the customary ten marks (\$2.50) only to those lackeys and maids who wait upon me personally. It will be well for you to instruct Baron von Mirbach similarly, or you will run the risk of feeding a whole tribe of men and girls who are merely second or third assistants."

William's valets, I heard later on, received forty marks (\$10) from their imperial master as Christmas gratuity; all his other attendants, men and women, had to be content with the customary ten marks "for gingerbread."

"And that is the only drink money the Kaiser dispenses all the year round," complained the wife of one of the wardrobemen, who did my plain sewing; "outside of Christmas, he never seems to have a copper for his body-servants. Although himself continuously in want of stimulants (he often drinks four or five egg cognacs in the course of the day), it never strikes him that his overworked attendants might feel like stepping across the way to the canteen and 'crook an arm.'"

Occasionally beggars that accosted him on his rides, received three marks from the Kaiser, and a like sum was appropriated every Sunday for the benefit of the contribution plate; his adjutant handed him the coin

before he stepped into his carriage going to church; beggars must report at the royal stables for their mite.

Whether this tardy generosity is an evidence of hard-heartedness, as people in the royal service claim, or whether the Kaiser's unlimited egotism is to blame, I would not like to decide. Perhaps the Kaiser's inability properly to judge monetary values remains the prime factor. To emphasize this let me give one more anecdote.

William, who is nothing if not a slave to tradition, revived a habit of several of his ancestors, namely, to stroll out of his palace gate as an ordinary mortal once a year, on holy night, when he donned a subdued civilian dress and when no adjutant or anyone of the body service was allowed to follow him—a general order that, however, did not apply to the secret police, which were made acquainted with the Kaiser's every outdoor move beforehand, and had its guardian angels about wherever and whenever he was in the open.

The war-lord walked through the park behind the Neues Palais toward Sans Souci and often rambled beyond the gates of the ancient château, wishing a "Merry Christmas" to and distributing small gold pieces among needy persons he came across.

It was originally a novel amusement for the Kaiser and a fairly profitable one for the poor men and women who happened to attract his attention while his pockets were still lined; that is, while his charity fund of two hundred marks (\$50) divided up into fourteen gold crowns and three double crowns, lasted.

Courtiers and others near William used to rejoice in this solitary manifestation of royal good-will, that helped to re-cement the bonds between king and people.

"Will it please your Majesty to go on your usual Santa Claus expedition this evening before the trees are lit?" asked court marshal Count Eulenburg at second breakfast on the day preceding Christmas.

"Most certainly," replied the Kaiser, "and, by the

way, direct Miessner to furnish me with silver coins, instead of gold, this time—fourteen thalers and three or four five-mark pieces. You see,” he added, addressing himself to the Empress, “I have been thinking about this giving away of gold; some poor devil, whom I try to benefit, might arouse suspicion when he offers my Christmas present in payment. That element of distrust and danger I will circumvent by spending only thalers among my needy friends hereafter.”

“How thoughtful of you,” lisped the Empress, devouring her husband with admiring glances.

“Your Majesty thinks of everything,” said the Countesses von Brockdorff and von Bassewitz. And “of everything, particularly his pocket,” whispered my neighbor.

When the Kaiser came to take leave of her Majesty that evening he drew from his overcoat pocket the shabby little amount he had decided to spend, fifty-seven marks in all.

“The poor are in luck tonight,” he said. “Miessner selected the brightest thalers in his treasury, they are really very pretty,” and the Kaiser laughed as the hapless Princess Lamballe may have laughed as she exclaimed:

“If the poor have no bread, let ’em eat cake.”

Maybe the practice of bringing up German princes in complete ignorance of money-matters was responsible.

Royal parents seemed to think that to deprive their sons up to the day of their majority of a decent amount of pocket money was the surest and only way to keep their boys from becoming spendthrifts.

In Prussia, the princely youth was allowed a few thalers (\$2 to \$2.50) per week, of which the minutest accounting was demanded, and which—and that is the worst feature—he may not even manage in person, that privilege being reserved for his governor. The practice has worked havoc immeasurable with us, as well as with others.

True, young Hohenzollerns are not liable to be flogged nowadays for spending a few coppers unnecessarily, as Crown Prince Frederick (known as Frederick the Great) was when he gave a royal servant fifteen cents for bringing his dog from Potsdam to Wusterhausen, a distance of twenty miles (his father beat him "for having no more sense than to pay a man who merely did his damned duty"); but even Wilhelm's parents insisted upon bringing up their heir to the throne without giving him a chance to acquaint himself with the power, the temptation, the misery and the joy that the possession of ready money gives.

As the holes in the Greek philosopher's toga denoted vanity rather than contempt of worldly opinion, so the patches on a youthful Hohenzollern's trousers indicate not Spartan frugality, but a false notion of the principles of economics.

The Kaiser's sons were not taught that it was necessary to economize in order to be liberal; they were merely deprived of things they liked—good clothes and cash—in obedience to a hoary delusion that has peopled the thrones of Europe with spendthrifts or niggards for centuries.

I have heard the former Court Marshal von Liebenau say that William, when at college, never had a copper over and above his expenses, all of which were disbursed by him, Liebenau.

"When he entered active service, that old bane—penury—hovered over the lieutenant, captain and colonel; his entire income was made over to me every month, and as it was always spoken for in advance, my young master even aspired in vain for a pocket-piece, a double gold crown" (\$5).

Wilhelm, having been unable to acquire intimate acquaintance with money, almost showed a childish attitude toward financial questions, and, having all his own wants attended to as a matter of course, failed to understand or appreciate what was due to others.

And what was sauce for the Prussian gander was gravy for the Bavarian goose as well. The reader will recollect some of the vagaries of Louis of Bavaria, whose wild extravagance and contempt for the science of addition and subtraction led to his committing murder and suicide. When Louis was sixteen, his mother wrote to Queen Augusta: "I am in despair and hardly know where to turn. I cannot conscientiously oppose the King's methods, still it is hard to see my children suffer under a system that robs them of all the little joys of life. The King will not allow our boys to have more than eight groschens (fifteen cents) pocket money per week—ridiculous amount.

"Yesterday I learned that Ludwig had contracted with a dentist to have two of his sound molar teeth pulled, for which the boy was to get twenty florins. The Prince had given a fictitious name, and the dentist heard only by the merest accident, and at the last moment, whom he had before him. Of course he quailed on learning the truth, and very properly informed our court marshal, who in turn acquainted me with the facts. I forbade him to mention the matter to his Majesty," the Queen went on, "but I am afraid it will penetrate to the all-highest ears by and by, and then the Prince's allowance may be cut off altogether."

"Has anybody heard of the projected English tour of the Meiningens?" asked the Kaiser at luncheon one afternoon.

Von Egloffstein had heard the Hereditary Prince say that he and the Princess intended to accept an invitation to Windsor Castle.

"But the cost!" exclaimed the Kaiser; "it will be at least ten marks (\$2.50) a head every day they are absent."

The very next day, at second breakfast, the Kaiser's menu card, on which he had sketched "the future south front of the castle with the surrounding territory," was handed around.

"I am glad to announce," he said, "that I have perfected my plans for the improvement of the *Schloss*. After abolishing the popular amusement of looking into the Kaiser's windows," he referred to the dismantling of the houses opposite the royal residence, the *Schloss Freiheit*—"after routing the sweet plebs across the way, I have decided to erect another barrier between myself and publicity. As the sketch shows, terraces will be built adjoining the south front of our palace, and they will extend far enough to place within the royal precinct that part of the castle square that lies between the *Schloss* and the great fountain. These terraces," added the Kaiser, "will at the same time serve to deaden some of the noise from the incessant traffic."

"Will the city be willing to sacrifice the space?" asked the Prince of Saxe-Altenburg, who was the guest of honor that day.

"With my permission, certainly," replied the Kaiser.

"But the scheme, if pushed to such length, will involve an outlay of twenty millions," warned the minister of the royal house, Wedell.

"Maybe, more or less." The Kaiser said it with a frown, but immediately resumed his semi-bantering tone, and added lightly: "Perhaps I will authorize your Excellency to arrange another lottery, or to take up a loan that holds out large premiums, as they do in Austria and Serbia."

With that he turned to the Countess Brockdorff, whom he detests and ordinarily treats with the severest indifference, and, by way of changing the subject, told her a risqué story across the table.

That is the Kaiser all over; it worries him to think that any of his relatives should spend ten marks, and he disposes of ten or twenty millions of public moneys as if they were old bricks or oyster shells; in fact, the Kaiser has no notion whatever of the value of things.

Among the many strange facts in these revelations,

William's remark concerning the Meiningens' trip to England is certainly not the least astonishing, coming from a man who is almost continuously on the road—the heir and heiress to a Duchy, paying a visit of state at Windsor Castle, covering their combined expenses with a paltry five dollars a day!

The surmisal is too ridiculous to require analysis; but it might be just as well to state here that the Prince of Meiningen was a very rich man, while his wife was certainly the best-dressed woman at court. Besides, on their travels, the princely pair were always attended by a suite of some twenty people, all of whom, the Kaiser thought, could be provided with transportation and incidentals for ten marks per day!

The cold, precise truth is that the man striving for absolute power in Germany and in the rest of the world, was as deficient of business capacity as of the love of truth, of decency and humanity. Before and during the war, he promised the revenue of the great Indian Princes to all and sundry who subscribed a million and more for war loans. And when that failed to draw money to his coffers, he granted subscribers countships and principalities to be formed in Australian territories.

We now return to that imperial twenty-million project launched with so much self-satisfied complacency "between soup and fish." William brought forward fresh arguments in favor of his grand scheme.

The municipal council could not offer any objection to his plans, "no matter what the cost," for he means to give the terraces over to his sons as a playground. Besides the terraces would offer a formidable bulwark against the plans of anarchists morning, noon and night.

And as a final trump: "We will promise to prolong the annual stay of the court in Berlin at least one month or six weeks"—arguments worthy of the royal

imposter, who raised the mineself-und-Gott piffle to the dignity of a cult.

Give up one-half of a public square—the most imposing in town—as a playground for his half-dozen “kids,” some half-witted, like Oscar, others with criminal tendencies like Eitel Fritz; again, others mere clown-princely trash.

“Bulwark against anarchists!” Well, the ex-Kaiser should gaze upon his castle now! And he would prolong his stay for twenty millions and a public square. He would indeed until his bones dropped from the gibbet erected by his loving subjects!

“The greatest fools are also the greatest charlatans and liars,” laughingly remarked Prince Bismarck to Duke John Albrecht when he related the facts to him.

All through the public and private life of the Kaiser confusion in matters of finance prevailed. For instance, there were no appropriations for the different sections of the household which were not subject to drafts by the imperial master. “The Kaiser would as lief gobble up our servants’ pension or salary appropriations as——”

“As the Guelph Fund?” interrupted Duke Gunther.

“Your Highness is pleased to jest,” replied the Count. “Forty-eight millions! No one could spend such an amount.”

“Oh, yes, my brother-in-law could,” laughed the Duke.

The Guelph Fund represented the sequestered fortune of King George of Hanover, and his heir, the Duke of Cumberland, and its history is interesting. After annexing Hanover in the summer of 1866, Prussia restored their private fortune to the deposed Guelphs by the convention of September 29, 1867, but there was a string, or rather a steel cable, attached to this apparent act of restitution. Pointing out that the poor blind man

whom he had vanquished might utilize his money to raise an army against victorious Prussia, Bismarck, with the consent of the Diet, seized the private property of the royal Hanoverians a second time, pleading that its annual interest was needed to ward off the Guelph party's secret intrigues.

So the Guelph Fund became the Reptile Fund—a golden trough out of which William's friends and the government's leading men, fed for twenty-six years, there being no public accounting, the Chancellor laying a list of disbursements before the Kaiser at the end of each year, whereupon the receipts were destroyed.

Court gossip fixes upon the Kaiser's unwillingness to give up so large a fortune to which he might have recourse occasionally as the principal cause of his frequent breaches of faith, but I have never succeeded in tracing even a solitary Guelph Fund million on its way to the Kaiser's pockets.

The Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward), it was whispered, had written a letter to the late King George of Greece, telling him that the Kaiser "gulped" down the whole of the Guelph Fund, but "Uncle Bertie," instead of sending his letter to Athens direct, forwarded it to Copenhagen for approval by his mother-in-law, and Queen Louise caused the conspiracy to leak out. But, in a burst of confidence, her Majesty showed the letter to Princess Valdemar, who had stirred up the imbroglio between Bismarck and Czar Alexander not so many years before.

That Marie d'Orleans-Bourbon, on her part, was unable to constrain her triumph at the hope of seeing Germany's Kaiser humiliated, is, perhaps, not to be wondered at, for her Royal Highness detested William as heartily as she adored France. So, with true feminine acumen, she sat down and telegraphed the sweet morsel broadcast to all royal Wilhelm-haters, or princes that she considered sympathizers, and all wished the undertaking Godspeed—all except Cousin Ferdinand

of Bulgaria. This queer individual, eager to oblige the Kaiser, betrayed the confidence reposed in him, hoping thereby to gain William's gratitude.

Ferdinand had a rude awakening out of that pipe-dream, for only a few weeks later William called him names that figured largely in the correspondence of the late Marquis of Queensbury with a certain English poet-dramatist. And to Czar Nicky's face, too!

And you should have heard the Kaiser's estimate of Ferdi's true character a week or so before Bulgaria's caving in. "Dirty traitor," "Jew-bully," "murderer" and "crowned Shylock" were some of the milder epithets flying about. And the Kaiserin and her daughter Louise fully agreed that his Balkan Czarship was a "swine."

At best, the Berlin court was a veritable hotbed of ill-natured gossip. In the morning one of the Kaiser's adjutants might have a good story to relate that, without involving a breach of faith, keyed a perplexing situation, while letters from other courts, the tattle of princely visitors, correspondence of high aristocrats or statesmen, a ministerial crisis, a sudden lapse in the routine of royal employment as a visit postponed or a "headache to order," completed the chain of evidence that linked together of its own accord, as it were, and in the end revealed hidden springs of action and private views and motives of individuals affording a better analysis of the minds of historic personages than a whole library of ordinary contemporaneous accounts, written by outside spectators, who faithfully copied each other.

Except for the details, here first revealed, the Guelph Fund story is ancient history, but is important as a precedent, since German statesmen thought it incumbent upon them to sequester the private fortune of a one-horse king in order that this ex-monarch might not use the money to stir up trouble against conquering Prussia. William has six stalwart sons, than whom

no greater scamps, intriguers and wasters of human life walk Germany's soil, or any other. All six will have millions and a whole skin—all six enjoy health, liberty and complete freedom from conscience or scruples of any kind; all six will have millions at their beck and call.

CHAPTER XIII

Not long before he crossed over into Holland, I heard the Kaiser say: "Wilson shall stand before the world as the champion liar of the age. That title shall adhere to him like the rankest sort of eczema."

"Because," he explained, Wilson had lied shamefully when he suggested that "even one in Germany's seventy millions of people" would be base enough to wish for the downfall of the Hohenzollerns.

"Nero wished the Roman people had but one head, that he might cut it off," he continued; "so I wish the German people had only one head to declare with one voice: The Kaiser and his loyal people forever and ever, hooray!"

Yet when Wilhelm hid behind Wilhelmina's petticoats, no German made a serious attempt to persuade him to come home, to seek safety and refuge among "his own seventy millions."

I hold no brief for the Russian court that was. Some of its grand dukes were as contemptuous of right and justice, of fair-play for "subjects" and of their own obligations to humanity as William, but the escape of the Dowager-Empress and ex-Grand Dukes Michael and Nicholas from the Bolshevik hell proves that Russian royalty was not entirely bereft of friends. The three were kept prisoners for a year, the several massacres taking place during that period stopped short at their cells—they were esteemed as human beings if not as princes and in due time were allowed to escape.

If the Kaiser and Crown Prince had relied on their German friends to save them, their names certainly would appear in the necrological section of the *Almanack de Gotha* of 1919!

I offer facts instead of explanations:

During his long reign the Kaiser has never been guilty of a generous act lacking in theatrical possibilities, while his boasted concern for the working classes was generally recognized, as a sham. Witness his action of ordering the Königsberg pioneers to make for him a number of improvements in Theerbude forest by building cottages and sheds around his hunting lodge. The Reichstag called it "confounding mine and thine," and "malefeasance worthy of a satrap who recognizes no distinction between the state's and his own individual resources."

Another picture: Noon at the Neues Palais. Forty hungry women and girls, some old, many young and comely, were hanging about the backstairs of what was intended for the most magnificent royal court of the day! Most of them were munching black bread, scantily spread with lard, while from tin bottles they partook of long draughts of cold chicory masquerading under the name of coffee. One or two proudly exhibited a hunk of salt pork, but many in the crowd depended entirely upon the charity of their colleagues or the good nature of the liveried servants, which latter receive either full board, or eat at the canteen.

And these women, wearing washed-out calico dresses all the year round and a twenty-four by forty-inch shawl barely covering their heads and breasts in winter, are imperial and royal employees, as well as the Kaiserin's natty maids and our chasseurs in gold and silver laden dress—the only difference being that the maids and flunkies are engaged by the year, while the women are employed by the month, i.e., during the residence of the court of Potsdam.

But what about the biblical crumbs that fall from the rich man's table? There were none. The allowance for the royal board was cut so fine as to just suffice for their Majesties, the entourage and the guests; and when the Kaiser invited extra company at the last

moment, the courses were hurried to cover up the shortening of rations, and frequently some of the visitors were "skipped" as if by accident. Of the royal guests, many left the flower-strewn table as hungry as the scrub-girls did their nooks and corners after the noon recess.

The women hailed from Potsdam or the surrounding villages, and worked in the castle from 6 A.M. to 6 or 8 P.M., many walking an hour or more to and from home. They were employed in the apartments of the adjutants of the ladies and gentlemen of the court, in the servants' quarters and in the kitchens, at cleaning and scrubbing, wood and water-carrying, etc., but our two-hundred-room palace afforded neither a place where they might cook a scanty meal or a room where they could eat and rest. Even hot water was denied them.

"They get their wages,—what more do they want?" answered the house marshals, when we ladies pitied the unfortunates, and we had to subside for fear that those we tried to befriend might in consequence lose their livelihood—such as it was—under the protecting wing of the imperial eagle.

"They have their wages"—sixty cents per day for twelve or fourteen hours' work, and even in the coldest winter—the court seldom removed to Berlin before Christmas—couldn't get a cup of coffee or a plate of soup from the crowned master, though it was self-evident that none of the women had time to go home for dinner recess.

A person of my rank runs against this class of servants on rare occasions only; but accident led me into the lower regions of the palace once in a while, and it gave me a shock every time to see these Pariahs of our splendid court fighting hunger and cold with food devoid of warmth, behind doors and staircases where the wind whistled the international anthem of poverty.

After witnessing their distress and hearing their complaints once, I never went into the souterrain without

issuing an order on the canteen for so and so many pea and lentil soups. The gratitude of these women was heart-rending. When I spoke of these unfortunates to the managing goldsticks, I was told "there is no money for extras." "Speak to my colleague of this or that branch—my cashdrawer is empty," or, "if I signed a voucher for a semi-charitable object, the Kaiser would have my administration impeached."

Even when, the women having made me their advocate, I asked that they be paid weekly, as the law provides, instead of three days after the first of the month as customary, this "boon" was denied on the plea that it would upset a practice of long standing, the noble practice of starving royal employees!

And this happened in Prussia, where every man, woman and child contributed on an average of twenty cents per year toward Wilhelm's salary as Father of the Fatherland; Englishmen contribute seven and a half cents; Russians used to, four and a quarter cents, and Austrians eight and a quarter cents; Frenchmen pay a little over one-half cent; Americans one-twelfth part of a cent toward the salary of their president.

Wilhelm then was the best paid of the lot, yet had the vulgarity and meanness to begrudge a living wage and decent treatment to poor people who helped fill his own dinnerpail.

Indeed the smallness of the all-highest person that was, defies imagination. Listen to this exposition of the rule and regulations that governed our imperial and royal court under William II.

At the one memorable visit paid to her linen-presses (she has been heralded as an exemplary housewife ever since) the Kaiserin noticed that the linen was deposited on the bare shelves, and asked what it meant.

"May it please your Majesty," explained the keeper, "I have repeatedly asked for paper, but Count Puckler says he has no funds for luxuries."

"Luxuries," repeated the Kaiserin, "luxuries where

my linen lies!" and turning to me, as superintendent of the royal household, she said: "See to it that paper of the very best quality is purchased this very hour, and if the house marshal interferes, advise me."

Armed with this all-highest authority, I bought several marks' worth of blue paper, and sent them to the linen room, but the servant returned with the astonishing information that the woman dared not accept the material, as the stamp of the chief court marshal's office was lacking.

"Nonsense," I said, "tell the keeper I command her to place the paper in the presses at once and have no more words about it." Five minutes later, Fräulein Kubou came in person.

"Madame," she cried, "I am the sole support of a family; do not ruin me! If the grandmaster learns that I am concerned in this business of runing up bills for which there is no appropriation, I shall be sacked."

"Come with me," I said, "and I will put the paper in myself. At the same time you shall send a report in writing to the house marshal setting forth what I have done, and I will acknowledge that I acted despite your protest."

This letter provoked endless correspondence.

His Excellency, the grandmaster, to her Ladyship, the dame of the royal household: "I have the honor to inform you that you have overstepped your authority, and that you will be held responsible with your salary for the unauthorized expenses incurred."

Her Ladyship to the grandmaster: "Nothing of the sort. I acted upon her Majesty's express orders."

The grandmaster to the house marshal: "You must pay this paper bill—which her Majesty has ordered."

The house marshal to the keeper of the linen: "This paper bill must be paid for by your department as soon as there is a surplus."

The keeper of the linen to the house marshal: "Sorry I have not got a copper. The use of clean linen has

again increased, his Majesty having been pleased to sleep in his own room several times of late, which means twelve extra sheets, according to the last accounting."

The house marshal to Baron von Mirbach, chief court marshal of her Majesty: "Will you oblige this office by paying the enclosed bill, which her Majesty herself audited? We have no appropriations for such extras."

Baron von Mirbach to Baron von Lyncker (privately): "You ask me to create a dangerous precedent, *mon cher*. I answer: 'No thanks! Not if I know myself.'"

The house marshal to the keeper of the privy purse: "There are no appropriations out of which the enclosed bill can be paid, and no surplus funds in any of the departments. You will therefore report the case to his Majesty, and get the all-highest authorization for payment. As the enclosures show, her Majesty herself graciously ordered the purchase."

Eight sheets of foolscap paper, emblazoned with crests and garnished with stamps and the most illegible signatures, and crammed with officious language in lapidary style,—all about sixty-two cents and a half! Of course, there would have been just as much fuss if the object had been the fraction of a cent.

The man who was lying awake o' nights, thinking about changing the map of the world and enslaving in particular, the English-speaking races in America and Great Britain, thought in coppers.

The Kaiser's coppers policy even interfered with his predilection for cleanliness. As their Majesties were sometimes unable to obtain clean sheets for their bed,—the statement that the royal servants, men and women, were kept exceedingly short in respect to towels and bedclothes will not surprise. As a matter of fact the allowance for the first-named article was two per week; the bed-linen was changed every month.

One evening, when we were talking in her Majesty's dressing-room of the vagaries of Prince Frederick Leo-

pold, Countess Bassewitz remarked that he compelled his valets and the chasseur, serving him at table, to bathe morning, noon and night; that is, always before they came into personal contact with him.

"That is extravagant," said her Majesty; "but persons of our rank cannot insist too strongly upon the daily bath for their attendants."

"If there are enough bathrooms!" I remarked.

"Well," said the Kaiserin, "I suppose there is a sufficient number in our palaces, at least here and in the *Schloss*."

"I beg your Majesty's pardon, here, as well as in Berlin, we have but two bathrooms for servants,—one for the men, one for the women."

The Empress gave me a startled look. "Two bathrooms?" she gasped.

"T-w-o," I repeated; "and not only the people of the body-service, but all the liveried and uniformed men and women in the palace—coachmen, fourriers, chasseurs and heads of the household departments—are expected to use them."

"My dear," said the Empress, in her haughtiest tone, "you are evidently misinformed," and, rising, she shook off her dressing sacque with a little shudder, as if to repel an unclean sensation. "I do so hate to speak of matters of that kind," she added, dismissing us with a curt shrug.

What would her Majesty have thought if I had continued in my revelations, for the scarcity of bathrooms was not the most disgraceful evidence of penury at the Prussian court, by far. The two eighteen by thirty-six huckaback towels given out Saturdays must suffice for the casual bath as well as for the every-day ablutions. The servants' wash bowls are little tin affairs holding less than three pints; foot-tubs and pitchers are tabooed, together with other conveniences. But that is not all. The toilets for the servants are located on the backstair landings, which are lighted by kerosene lamps

day and night, and one closet must do for every twenty-six persons.

Once or twice one of the Kaiserin's maids of honor asked me to increase the scanty allowance of linen. "I would like to," I answered, "but cannot, as funds for labor and material in the wash-kitchen just suffice for a stipulated amount of laundry. Half a dozen extra stockings per week would upset calculations."

"But if I furnish the soap?"

"Your Ladyship is very generous, but the employees of the wash-kitchen have all the work they can do now, and there is no money to hire more."

While the Kaiser's and Kaiserin's "body-servants," so-called, were allowed to go filthy, the blue-blooded retainers were overpaid and overfed and superbly housed into the bargain.

The grandmasters of both Kaiser and Kaiserin and the several house marshals received \$7,500 per year salary, lived in royal villas rent free, and had the free use of carriages and horses (or motor cars) for themselves and family for private and official use. The court, besides, furnished their households with two servants wearing the imperial livery, and as many house-maids. Their mileage equaled that of a commanding general, and as traveling fees they received \$7.50 per day. When their Excellencies wanted to eat at home or dine out, they needed but to notify their chief in order to be entitled to an additional \$3.75 per day.

Her Majesty's grandmistress, the Countess Brockdorff, having no household of her own, occupied a splendid apartment in the royal residence, and received the same salary, mileage and traveling fees as the gentlemen mentioned, while two lackeys and carriages galore were subject to her orders. The Kaiser even paid mileage for her maid, though the girl denied ever having received a copper of it. As to her Excellency, she was as sharp after perquisites as the devil is after

the souls of poor sinners, and a month seldom passed that she did not hand in a bill for so and so many meals missed.

There is an idea abroad that dames of the court endure the caprices of their mistress and the monotony of life in the gilded cage out of sheer devotion to royalty, or on account of the distinction it confers upon the appointee; but this is not true.

I received a salary of \$1,500 per annum, had royal lackeys and maids and carriages, as well as board and lodging and travelling fees amounting to \$7.50 per day.

The Kaiser's valets received about \$40 salary per month, besides board and lodging, and either liveries or remuneration for dress-suits, like all the rest of the servants and officials hereafter named. To married men, lodgings for their families in royal houses were assigned. The wardrobemen's salaries varied between \$20 and \$75 per month, according to the age of servitude. Ebeling, the Kaiser's body-groom, had a few dollars more. Rieger, his picturesque gun-charger, had \$40 per month, and the other chasseurs and stable officials received from \$30 to \$35.

Her Majesty's body-service included Fraulein von Haake, woman of the bed-chamber, salary \$40 per month; two wardrobe-women, salary \$20 to \$22 per month; two wardrobe man-servants, salary \$40 to \$45 per month; the caretaker of the royal bed had \$21 per month, besides board and lodging, and \$2.50 per month for dresses. Her Majesty's two seamstresses, engaged all the year round, received fifty cents per day and board and lodging.

Just to tease the people in America who cannot hire servants for "love or money," I'll append a list of the wages our court used to pay to the ordinary run of male and female servants before and during the war.

The Kaiserin's five footmen had \$3 per month; her body-coachman, received \$37.50, and her body-riding-master, \$50. The valet, who waited at table, and the

understewards, received from \$40 to \$50 per month.

Augusta Victoria employed twelve chambermaids for her own use, all of them trim, sturdy girls. They received \$7.50 per month in wages and \$5 for dress. But all these men and women comprised only an infinitesimal part of the total number employed. Our court marshal's office had sixty different kinds of employees on its staff, the majority being entitled to board and lodging or board wages. The board wage was seventy-five cents per day in foreign countries, half that amount in Germany.

Do you wonder that a royal peerage, starving his servants at thirty-seven and one-half cents per day, has no sympathizers? But William thought he would never need sympathizers.

Shirking responsibilities toward servants is mighty small business, but what do you think of a Kaiser who forces his servants to advance him money, and quite considerable sums at that?

When William's court marshal sent servants, men and women, to other cities, they had to pay for their transportation out of their own pockets. Neither did they receive money for expenses.

I remember that Count Eulenburg, my superior officer, at one time dispatched four maids from Berlin to Hamburg to prepare the old *Schloss* for a visit of the Emperor—one with linen, another to take care of the silver, the rest to put the rooms in order. They stopped at Kronberg over night, and borrowed money right and left, to procure food, because they had spent their last money for railway fares, and could get nothing to eat in Hamburg until the kitchen crew arrived from Berlin; that is, three or four days later. Count Eulenburg, to my utter amazement, bore out the women's pleas. "Where should the money for advances come from?" he said. "We pay all compulsory accounts at the beginning of the month, and what is left must be held at the Kaiser's disposal!"

And the grandmistress, Countess Brockdorff, explained: "We cannot get along without these forced loans. But I think the marshal's office might be more discriminating. Only single men and girls should be sent on journeys, for the supposition is that they have a little money put aside. The salary of our people that are married is usually spent during the first week after pay-day, and if ordered away, they have to borrow to get to the place of destination."

In all the years I served William and Augusta Victoria, the royal attendants received an advance on their mileage and travelling expenses only once, namely, when Prince and Princess William, accompanied by an immense suite, went to Queen Victoria's jubilee.

But by this hangs a tale. No sooner had the court returned to Potsdam than Herr von Liebenau demanded a strict accounting of the moneys disbursed, and, by applying the most niggardly estimate on each and every item, he succeeded in unraveling numerous instances of "extravagance."

These servants—think of it!—had often English breakfasts in England instead of the customary coffee and rolls, and paid London prices for beer, which are considerably higher than those prevailing in Potsdam. So the bills were ruthlessly cut, and the next salary day saw many clenched teeth, many tears, when it developed that the difference between the advance and the reduced bills had been deducted from the wages. It is not quite safe to mention the jubilee year among the ex-Kaiser's former servants.

The continual trips of servants between Potsdam and Berlin were responsible for everlasting quibbles between the employees and the treasury. Count Puckler, when in charge of the travelling accounts, issued an order commanding all members of the untitled retinue to utilize zone-tariff trains only, as their rates were considerably lower than those of fast trains.

The men and women would comply with this request,

but could not always do so on account of the urgency of business intrusted to them. When, afterward, the bills for railway fare were presented the most abominable rows ensued and servants valuing their standing with the court marshal's office very frequently suffered the loss of their advances rather than fight for what was due them, for though they might be ever so much in the right, they dared not attempt to prove their case, it being against etiquette to invoke the testimony of their Majesties.

It often happened that the Kaiser or Kaiserin ordered an attendant to proceed to the capital instantly. Now, if the court marshal doubted the command, the correct way would have been to inquire of the Kaiser or Kaiserin, but that would be against tradition. Besides, to call in doubt an employee's veracity is easier.

So, by making the Kaiser a present of part of the money advanced on his behalf, men-servants and maids, in their small way, helped to support the spectacle of imperial splendor enacted before the world—the many marks and pfennigs wrung from them contributed to the royal radiance that blinded onlookers!

What do you think of William, Emperor-Rex now, when you learn that servant girls' wages were no more safe from him than pupillory funds in Belgian banks? When it is revealed that in the midst of peace he confiscated his valet's stipend as unblushingly as the poor box in a French village church during the war?

Can you imagine an Empress clamoring in vain for a couple of toothbrush-holders? Well, Augusta Victoria wanted some for a week and longer, and could not get them.

"I will have them today," said the Empress. "Send for them."

I did so then and there, and repeated the order every morning for an entire week, but only on the afternoon of the tenth day were the holders produced.

It had taken all this time to scrape together \$3

necessary to procure the much-coveted articles, and her Majesty had made twelve separate and distinct rows about the matter.

Scenes and annoyances like these, growing out of the chronic withholding of necessary funds, were not limited to demands for extras. We went through the same farce every time a piece of china or glass was broken, for the Prussian court had no duplicates of such necessary articles as wash-pitchers, bowls, pails, soap-dishes or water-bottles. When one of these things in the Kaiserin's chamber, for instance, was smashed, her chief tire woman had to carry the pieces to the Haushofmeister, who laid them before the house marshal, who laid them before the court marshal, who laid them before the treasurer.

Then the treasurer authorized the making of an estimate to replace the articles, the two marshals countersigned the document, and sent a wagon into town to fetch it, or ordered it sent from Berlin. Of course, all this took time; and in the interim the Kaiserin had to do without the most necessary utensils sometimes.

As long as I can remember, my royal mistress never owned enough trunks to carry, besides her toilets, the linen for the imperial bed and bathrooms, and that despite the fact that the court was almost continuously on the road. Quite frequently her Majesty's linen was sent on a journey in drygoods cases or even in cardboard boxes—odds and ends from the storeroom.

As to the royal table, it was hardly better served than the average seventy-five cent table-d'hôte, while arrangements at the court balls were such as to permit only every ninth or tenth of the invited persons to obtain a swallow of third-rate champagne and a sandwich.

The visits of royalty were made occasions of great display, of course; reasonably liberal extra appropriations were made at such times, and lest the chasseurs

made a mistake, all foreigners got the best champagne, which otherwise were furnished to their Majesties only, but even then the court marshal managed to save an honest penny here and there.

CHAPTER XIV

BORROWING the simile from another reference of his, the Kaiser used to say he would like "to see the entire military force of the Fatherland personified in one being, that he might practice on it as on a lay figure."

But considering that the Reichstag has a voice in the matter of public expenditure, his Majesty was forced to be content to keep but two adjutants continuously employed.

These gentlemen, together with the members of the military household, including representatives of all arms and of the navy, rarely left his presence.

Their office adjoined his Majesty's wherever the court was established. In the Neues Palais it was situated on the ground floor, facing the barracks,—a not very spacious but dull room covered by a gray carpet and furnished with a number of red damask arm chairs placed in front of writing-desks.

The Kaiser always loved the panoply of pretense and the parade of war. As everybody knows, he never tired of arraying himself in full regimentals several different times per day so he might admire himself dolled up in military style.

During the early days of the Berlin revolution, the anarchists sold the Kaiser's uniforms to an enterprising Hebrew. His Cit's clothes they stole for themselves. There were enough to fit out hundreds of these ragamuffins.

The Kaiser owned a set of uniforms for each of the three hundred and odd Prussian regiments, horse, foot and artillery.

Besides the ones appurtenant to the Bavarian, Württemberg and Saxony contingents, also those of the

Austrian, English, Russian, Roumanian, Bulgarian, Spanish, Turkish and Swedish armies that enrolled his name as colonel, general or field marshal,—the proprietor of such an official wardrobe needed, of course, most extensive storerooms for the multicolored, tasseled and gold-laced treasures, and that they were magnificently cared for goes without saying.

He was supremely happy when strutting about in any one of these gorgeous uniforms. Space forbids minute description of the interesting collection, which, moreover, could never be complete, as the European military Minotaur, feeding on seven millions of men annually,—the original in the Cretan labyrinth was satisfied with seven youths and an equal number of virgins,—kept on expanding; in other words, as new types of uniforms and arms were constantly invented and added.

And when I say that the Emperor owned uniforms of all Prussian and almost an equal number of foreign regiments, don't forget that he was lord of the sea in Germany, Great Britain, Russia and Sweden,—dignities that carry with them cocked hats, broadswords and daggers, blue cloth and silver and gold lace galore,—I do not refer to the garments alone, but include all the ornaments, badges, sashes, sidearms, caps, helmets, czakos, busbies, czapkas, burganets, sabers, cuirasses, shoulder-points, knots and epaulettes, silver cords, belts, cartridge-cases, laces, etc., belonging to gala, full and fatigue accouterments.

All these innumerable and expensive accessories—a single pair of shoulder-knots often cost more than the uniform itself—must always be on hand and ready for use at any given time, as bright and as good as new.

A real war-lord's, the great Frederick's entire wardrobe was "sold to a Jew for three hundred thalers," and among the lot were the identical coat, breeches and boots he wore at Rossbach. When, to come down to our own period, the late William the First desired to be

photographed in the uniform of his bodyguards, one of his officers had to lend him a cuirass, his Majesty refusing to go to the expense of buying one. And these monarchs won more battles than the present Kaiser earned, or even offered, racing-cups, fake and otherwise.

As Lafayette raised a frigate and crew at his own expense to assist the young American republic, so could William have equipped the marines of a first-class battleship, or the officers of ten army corps, from his wardrobe without being reduced to nakedness.

The imperial peacock owned likewise scores of costumes adapted to various sports, numberless uniforms of yacht clubs in Germany and England, and last, but not least, an astounding array of plain clothes, with accompaniments of hats, gloves, ties, canes, shoes, buttons and scarf pins which for each suit were especially selected, forming part of the garment, as it were.

A valet and two dressers were constant attendants in the uniform room from early morning till night, so that the Kaiser was able to change his uniforms with the same celerity as his mind.

I recall how a certain young English Princess brought up the question of the Kaiser's inaptitude for the military with a vengeance.

The widow of the Red Prince, the late Frederick Charles, of Metz fame, was saying:

"If William has ever been able to resist a sudden impulse to any deed, no one in or out of his family heard of it.

"Some years ago he made his wife chief of cuirassiers, and designed a uniform for her. As proprietress of this crack regiment, Augusta Victoria is entitled to the insignia of a general; but the Emperor, unthinking as he is, bestowed upon her lieutenant's epaulettes. Think of it,—a lieutenant leading a regiment before the war-lord in parade, a lieutenant presiding at the state banquets in the officers' mess!

"On another occasion, when the Russian craze had hold of him, he issued an order compelling the officers of the general staff to attend desk-work in riding-boots. They did so for a day or two; but, finding it impossible to continue their studies in this heavy accouterment, combined among themselves to disobey the command and resumed ordinary footgear.

"But the most thoughtless of all his military blunders was his cabinet order creating your grandmother (and the old Princess bowed with a mock courtesy toward the Englishwoman), Queen Victoria, Chief of the First Dragoons."

"Young Mrs. Aribert," as Louise of Anhalt was familiarly called at court, started up, and seemed to be struggling for words.

"Tut, tut!" appeased her Royal Highness the little firebrand, placing one hand on Louise's knee, "no disrespect to her Majesty, I assure you. The stupidity was all on my grandnephew's part. He named the First Dragoons 'Queen of England Dragoons' just one hundred and eighty-two years, less two months and twenty-nine days, after the union between England and Scotland went into effect and the realm became officially known as Great Britain."

Everybody in the room sat speechless for a while, until Princess Aribert said half-pleadingly: "But, dear aunt, the change in the nomenclature that eventually had to be made caused no great havoc, I trust."

"Oh, no!" replied the Princess, "his Majesty did not suffer the least inconvenience on account of that error; but the taxpayers who had to pay double for the initials attached to the shoulder-straps and on the helmets doubtless felt greatly edified by the blunder, and so did the officers who for similar reasons were several thousand marks out of pocket."

The Kaiser's invitations to the festivities in honor of the late Kaiser Wilhelm's one hundredth birthday prescribed costumes of the end of the eighteenth century

for four hundred young army officers, and during a reception at the *Schloss*, Princess Radziwill spoke of the great difficulties that many army men experienced to procure the necessary costumes.

"These gentlemen have had a month's time to prepare for my pageant, and I would advise none to be laggard in complying with my commands," said the Kaiser haughtily. "If there are not enough tailors and embroiderers in Berlin, the work can be sent elsewhere."

"With your Majesty's permission, it is not the lack of hands and needles, but the scarcity of 'spondulicks,' that interferes. A great many of the younger officers, especially, can ill afford to spend six to seven hundred marks (\$150 to \$175) on a uniform that becomes useless after a few hours' wear."

"And where did your Grace acquire all this valuable information," resumed the Kaiser, bowing and accentuating each word with a sneer.

"Anywhere, everywhere. They talk of nothing else at the clubs." Princess Marie's French blood was up. "I felt like repeating to him what Pauline Metternich told the Empress Eugenie: 'I was born a grand dame, and I allow no one to ironize me,' " she said afterward.

The Kaiser shrugged disdainfully. "If it is necessary to clothe my guests as well as to feed them, I will appropriate twenty thousand marks to help your impecunious friends to pay for their costumes," he said, and at once changed the subject.

The promise had, however, been heard by everybody in the assemblage, and as all of us numbered at least one poor relative or friend among the four hundred officers, it is not strange that the affair gained wide publicity.

The news seemed to spread throughout Berlin and Potsdam like a piece of local intelligence. On the strength of it, the young roués of the Union Club doubled their stakes, and, the same night, "William-

the-Bountiful's " health was drunk in numberless mess-rooms and beer-halls by youthful members of the aristocracy and army men whose greatest care had suddenly and unexpectedly been lifted off their shoulders by the Kaiser's words,—lifted to descend again, its weight doubled by chagrin and disappointment, in the course of a few weeks, for, to quote one of Wilhelm's nephews, " The twenty thousand marks' pledge proved to be an illusion, if not something worse,—a snare! "

" With reimbursement guaranteed, as they thought, the officers commanded to the *tableaux vivants* spared no expense in their costuming. The most magnificent silks and velvets, the costliest gold and silver embroidery, were worn by everybody, rich and poor. ' We don't mind paying a couple of hundred marks ourselves in excess of the Kaiser's allowance,' argued these whole-souled young men.

" The result was the happiest—for William: a display gorgeous and luxurious far above expectations. And when it was over, the Emperor expressed his all-highest satisfaction, and went—hunting. He had seemingly forgotten about the twenty thousand marks, and no one dared remind him of his promise."

As Lord Burghley said to Queen Elizabeth: " Those who would make tools of princes are the tools themselves! "

Court and society had not yet ceased talking of this exhibition of bad faith, when the Kaiser startled the whole country by another incident.

As his brother Henry was about to embark for England in the man-of-war *Koenig Wilhelm*, the Kaiser sent him a dispatch expressing regret that he had no better ship to give him, " because those unpatriotic scamps in the Reichstag refused me the necessary funds."

There was a great deal of speculation in the public prints and in political circles as to the authenticity of the dispatch quoted, and the majority of courtiers even

inclined at first to the belief that Prince Henry had overstepped his authority when he read the imperial message before his officers, for the Prince, though tolerably good-natured and not bright, has the reputation of a mischief-maker, and it would be just like him to set parliament by the ears at his brother's expense if there was the slightest warrant for doing so.

However, one of the Kaiser's adjutants told me at least a week before the scandal became public that his Majesty had promised himself and them a great hullabaloo "previous to his brother's sailing."

Of course, that exonerates Prince Henry; he evidently "performed his damned duty," as they say in Prussia. But, granted the Kaiser created this opportunity for insulting the Reichstag in a moment of anger, that would not explain the several palpable inconsistencies of his message,—particularly, the nonsense of the assumption that an appropriation made in January or February would permit the placing in service of a battleship, one or two months later; and, the obvious untruth that a better ship was not available.

Strange, that at the outbreak of the German revolution the far-famed Prussian army officer did not rush to his Kaiser's support, said many, who believed the insidious propaganda about unconquerable German loyalty.

For one thing the Kaiser had played false to a great number of army officers individually, besides the four hundred mentioned, and was rated a pompous martinet and brutal master rather than a general of the Napoleon or Grant style, who were beloved and honored by their men.

Who has not read of William's thundering philippics against luxury in the officers' corps of the army?

"The Prussian lieutenant, captain and colonel must find supreme satisfaction in a frugal life. To live above one's income is the source of all social evil. Only the commanding generals have 'duties of representation'

to fulfill and their Excellencies shall not spend more for the purpose than the state appropriation permits," these are stock phrases of his. And as a variation of the stories on patched Hohenzollern trousers, the official telegraph bureau never failed to add the interesting information that the chief war-lord suffered the red facings of his uniform to be renewed several times before throwing away a coat.

In order to see whether his commands were strictly obeyed, the Kaiser invited himself to breakfast at the casino of some regiment every little while, announcing that he would pay ten marks for his and his suite's entertainment, not a penny more.

Now, the managers of these institutions knew that his Majesty had his preferences as to wines and victuals, and the imperial court marshal was only too ready to enumerate them to the anxious.

So French champagne of the highest grade, costly Rhine wines and Burgundy, imported cordials and cognacs were bought, also game and fresh sea-food, which latter is a luxury with us.

Furthermore, the exterior and interior of the club building were decorated, and often partly renovated, "and when, after all these preparations, the lavish outlay made, the imperial master departs with his corporal's guard of attendants (when he had to pay for them he never brought more than half a dozen gentlemen), and, on taking leave, remarked with self-satisfied emphasis: 'You see, my dear colonel, ten marks is quite enough for anybody to spend on his stomach; I have had a very good breakfast (or dinner), indeed, for that amount at your house,'—you should study the faces of the subaltern officers," said the Kaiser's adjutants.

"Count Eulenburg," they argued to themselves, "will send the governing board sixty or seventy marks within the next three months to pay for the exact number of seats occupied by the imperial party, while we poor devils will have to pay for the Piper, or

Roederer and the other delicacies out of our monthly pittance next week."

As a matter of fact, it used to cost a regimental mess from five hundred to fifteen hundred marks every time the war-lord tried its ten-marks' menu, and the officers had to make up the difference.

There have been times when the pleasure of feasting the sovereign cost the lieutenants of the Potsdam garrison one-tenth of their pay for several months in succession, and when the uniformed batmen of these pretty young fellows had to go without their more than modest wage in consequence.

But that is not all. The Kaiser's adjutants report from time to time stories of wrecked lives—lives of army men who were lured upon the path that killeth, in consequence of William's casino visitations.

It is a mistake to think that the majority of officers serving in the Prussian Guards were wealthy men; a good many are sons of high officials, endowed with mighty titles joined to a diminutive salary, who can give their boys but very scant assistance.

Of course, these handicapped chaps wanted to shine with the rest, and working, as it were, under the eyes of the imperial chief, endeavored to attract his attention. Now, there was only one way for a subaltern officer to secure this boon under William, *viz.*: to dress smartly, for the Emperor was known to pick the best-accounted man out of a hundred any time.

But if one aspired to be the Beau Brummel of the ballroom, the hunting-field, the club, the drill and parade grounds, credit with the regimental wardrobe-master was soon exhausted. Tailors demanding enormous profits as an offset against the risks involved had to be employed, and from them to the usurer was but one step. According to this recipe, Count von R——, a dashing captain of the Body Hussars, was ruined, and Herr von L——, of the First Guards, kept him company, with hundreds of others.

Herr von L——'s mother, widow of a privy counselor, who made her son a yearly allowance, besides keeping a family of several unmarried daughters out of a pension of forty-five hundred marks, came to me, requesting an audience of her Majesty. When, according to instructions, I inquired after the nature of her business, she confessed, to my utter consternation, that she intended to petition the Empress to use her influence toward keeping the Kaiser away from the military casinos.

Of course, to let Madame von L—— come near Augusta Victoria was entirely out of the question under the circumstances; but while, as a lady of the court, I did my best to dissuade her from her purpose, as a woman, I could not close my ears to that poor mother's arguments.

"My son's pay," she said, "amounted, as you probably know, to one hundred and seventy-five marks (\$33.50) per month, of which all but forty marks (\$10) were deducted for wardrobe account, representation and benefit funds, board and lodging, etc. Out of these forty marks and half as much again—my own modest contribution—Walter had to pay for his suppers, his tobacco, his carfare, his amusements and incidentals, and, though it was hard work, he managed to keep within his income until his Majesty began to invite himself to the casino.

"After the Kaiser's first visit," the worried mother told me, "my boy had to contribute fifteen marks toward the cost of the entertainment, and, to reimburse himself, borrowed a double gold crown from a comrade. In the course of the next month, his Majesty repeated his costly visit, and my boy was bled a second time. Then, after paying his comrade, he retained just five marks out of his pay, while a month of hunger and humiliation was staring him in the face! Soon afterward, Walter found himself struggling in the clutches of the usurer, and within six months (they have not

much patience with us penniless bureaucrats) his disgrace was gazetted.

"And believe me," added the broken-hearted mother, "my son's case is not an exceptional one; other promising young lives have been wrecked in the same way, and the ruin of hundreds of officers who judge the commanding chief by his deeds rather than by his words is threatening.

"For their sake, for the sake of their mothers and sisters," concluded Madame von L——, earnestly, "I am seeking audience with the Empress. I want to throw myself at her Majesty's feet, picturing to her the perils to which our sons are exposed by coming into personal contact with the Kaiser. I will say to her: 'His Majesty is certainly actuated by the highest motives, but the splendor of his presence, the gorgeousness of the entertainments provided for him, are apt to befool ambitious young men by deceiving them as to their own insignificance, and by lightening their sense of the responsibilities they owe to themselves, their family and their country.'"

In this connection, an observation by General von Kessel, then commander of the First Guards, deserves mention. "If his Majesty wants to see his officers well dressed, he should stop eating them out of pocket-money at their casinos. They cannot afford to play the host and pay their tailors at the same time," said the dashing adjutant.

Herr von Kessel referred to his Majesty's criticism of the dress of certain officers of the Breslau Cuirassiers, a body of troopers from whom William demanded hospitality on all occasions.

In foggy London even the gloomiest days of the war lost some of their somber hue with people "in-the-know" when it was telegraphed from the front that the Kaiser intended to be a real war-lord and take command of an ensuing battle.

"Good for our boys," "the most decent thing he

ever contemplated," said those English who remembered the stories of the mimic battle maneuvers, which William loved to prepare in times of peace, and which General von Haeseler characterized as magnificent, each ending like that between the fabulous lions whose tails alone remained on the field.

In his book, "The Blot Upon the Brain," William W. Ireland, M.D., Edinburgh says: "The power-drunk are easily beaten in the field by generals who prefer what is essential to what is superfluous."

As to the "superfluous,"—when returning from a review, the war-lord seldom spoke of the success or non-success of the exercises; that he caught Lieutenant von X. Y. wearing an overcoat an inch shorter than the regulations stipulate, or a sub-officer attired in pantaloons of his own, instead of those furnished by the regiment, was of far greater importance in the Kaiser's eyes.

For his eyes reflected the mere outer film of things correctly enough, but did not penetrate below the surface because the mind directing them worked too rapidly to weigh the relative importance of things.

Once, at the greatest of military spectacles, the annual spring parade on the Tempelhofer Feld, which in all sorts of weather attracts Berliners by the hundred thousands, besides tens of thousands of visitors, the Kaiser eyed his wife's uniform and accouterment critically, and missed the special decoration given her by Queen Victoria, portraits of Victoria and Albert, surrounded by a chain of brilliants. He was furious. "How could you lose that precious jewel?" he demanded, disregarding the presence of his adjutants; "next you will drop the Regent (the finest of the Prussian Crown jewels) in some gutter, and I shall have to make good the loss."

"I do not know," stuttered the Empress. "Frau von Haake fastened it."

"Haake did? Well, I just long to give her a piece of my mind!"

And in order to jump on that miserable maid with as little delay as possible, the puissant war-lord cut in two the proudest military review of the year, to which princes by the score and all the ambassadors and ministers had been invited, while half the town had turned out in its honor!

And Paul of Russia was called a madman for running a mile to cudgle a soldier! The ornament, by the way, was returned by an honest workman, who found it in the grass and who got less than the legal fee as reward, and no recompense for his travelling expenses to Potsdam.

"One step above the sublime makes the ridiculous, and one step above the ridiculous makes the sublime again."

On another august military occasion, my mistress received most alarming news from Heligoland.

"In the course of some maneuvers," said Count Waldersee's cipher dispatch, "the Kaiser narrowly escaped drowning. For God's sake, beg his Majesty to desist from going to sea in heavy weather."

It seems that William got a wetting while attempting to cross from the Hohenzollern to a Hamburg Liner. His unreasonable love for having everything his own way led him to tempt fate, hence the appeal to the Empress, for "Uncle Alfred," too, swallowed a bucketfull of water when William got his fill.

On another occasion, the Kaiser went a-junketting on the small cruiser *Iltis* and the trip was dubbed a maneuver, so that the public treasury might be mulcted for the cost. William, as we know, used to embrace every opportunity for shifting expenses on his subjects' shoulders.

Hahncke, one of the *Iltis*' officers, was an ambitious young fellow, well liked on board, but somewhat lacking diplomacy.

When, on the first day out, the Kaiser greeted him with a patronizing air, saying to Prince Eulenburg that he meant to be particularly gracious "to the old man's cub, even if he did not have the making of an admiral in him," the lieutenant made some show of resentment and withdrew from the royal presence at the first possible moment.

That notwithstanding he received a "command" to attend the after supper drinking bout billed for the evening's entertainment.

There, surrounded by fawning sycophants, the Kaiser loaded Hahncke with mock favors, ordering him to drink more than was good for him.

Later, himself drunk with wine and arrogance, the Kaiser abused the lieutenant as a "sot" who ought to be reported to his captain for misbehavior.

Again Hahncke refused to accept the Kaiser's insults like a true courtier, i.e., as the essence of refined humor, but at the time trouble was avoided, the captain ordering all junior officers to retire.

Going on deck early next morning, the Kaiser found Hahncke engaged in drilling a company of sailors and started in at once finding fault.

"Couldn't he see that this man hadn't washed his neck," or that "another held his sword awkwardly?"

Hahncke's company was the "dirtiest gang of boobies that ever passed review before his imperial eye," and he would make an "example of them and their neglectful officer."

At this von Hahncke stepped forward briskly, taking a firmer grip on his sword.

"I beg your Majesty to step into the cabin—I have something to communicate to your Majesty," he said, adding under his breath: "For discipline's sake, I must see your Majesty alone."

The Kaiser gave the company of sailors a furtive glance and said: "The lieutenant will report your punishment. Meanwhile, stand at attention."

William then went ahead into the main cabin, which, for the time being, was deserted, and addressed von Hahncke sarcastically: "And what may your lieutenantship have to say to me? Be quick. If there is any excuse for the piggishness in your company, out with it!"

"I am not here to make excuses," replied Hahncke, looking the Kaiser squarely in the eye. "I asked you to step into the cabin to settle a point of honor. You have insulted me before my comrades and before my men without reason or warrant; you have trampled on my military honor and on my manhood and I want you to give me the satisfaction to which I am entitled at your hands as a Prussian officer."

The Kaiser moved uneasily. "Lieutenant von Hahncke," he said, assuming his most imperious air, "you will retire to your cabin and await my pleasure. Give up your sword. You are a prisoner."

"Not until you have given me satisfaction," cried Hahncke, advancing menacingly.

By this time the Kaiser had edged to the door of the cabin and, as he was about to step out, he said, with all the brutal disdain he is capable of: "Shut your snout!"

Before William could make another move, Hahncke's tall figure was bending over him:

"Did you speak officially, or shall I regard your insults as the outbursts of a drunken and disorderly mind?" he hissed into the Emperor's ear, totally neglectful of giving William his accustomed title of Majesty.

"How dare you, canaille?" demanded the Emperor, with blanched face and gnashing his teeth.

But he had not quite finished the damning word, when von Hahncke's good right hand, dropping the sword, shot out and landed squarely on the Emperor's jaw, felling him to the ground. As he lay there, blood

gushing from his mouth, the young officer realized what he had done and rang the bell.

"His Majesty is not well," he said to the orderly. "Send for his valet and dispatch a man to the commandant, informing him that I have a report to make."

Pandemonium reigned on the *Ilitis* for the next fifteen minutes. All sorts of conflicting reports were whispered on deck, in mess-room, below, everywhere, but the most audacious only dared hint that his Majesty might have been overcome by an epileptic fit.

While the Kaiser's prostrate form was carried to the chart-room, his own cabin being in disorder, the white-faced Hahncke told his story to the horrified commander.

When he had finished, his superior officer merely said: "Your sword, sir, you are my prisoner—go to your room until further notice." And under his breath he added: "As a Prussian officer and descendant of a long line of soldiers, you know, of course, what is expected of you."

Poor Hahncke did know. As soon as he got hold of his revolver he pressed the muzzle against his temple, at the same time jumping off deck. His body was never recovered.

The Kaiser was with difficulty brought to by his physicians, who, having instructions from the commandant, expressed satisfaction to him that the "accident had passed off without leaving considerable disfiguring marks.

"The beam that struck your Majesty as the ship gave that sudden lurch might have broken your Majesty's chin or cheek bone. Your Majesty's subjects ought to thank God on their bended knees for the good luck that attended your Majesty amid ill-fortune."

I don't blame the Kaiser for accepting the story and causing it to be telegraphed all over the world.

As to poor Hahncke, quite an elaborate yarn was concocted to explain his death.

He had been in love with a young woman "beneath his rank," and had asked the Emperor for permission to marry her, but, of course, his Majesty had sternly refused.

"From that moment on," said the official papers, "young Hahncke became melancholy and his suicide was the result of much brooding over his hopeless love affair."

There were other versions, too, but none came anywhere near the truth. Nor was it explained why the *Iltis* remained in commission three weeks longer than originally intended.

The real reason was: His Majesty did not dare go ashore until the last traces of the punishment he received had disappeared.

So much for the physical stigmata. As to the moral, William tried to forget them in drink. He probably drank more champagne during these three weeks than during any like period of his life except on that cold November day (1918) when he travelled from Berlin to Cassel to take council with his wife and children about inviting Scheidemann and Haase to enter the government with Prince Max, and when the "Reds" refused to see him, or take pity on him, unless he first dismissed Ludendorff.

CHAPTER XV

It has been my privilege to meet practically all the Diplomats of my time. Spending my life at European courts, I have been thrown into relations with statesmen from all parts of the world. And after this long intimacy with Kings and Queens, with Princes and Ambassadors, I do not hesitate to say that William seemed to have the least kingly mind of them all. I witnessed his judgment of men and events while I lived in his house and listened to his opinions on world affairs. I wondered at his admiration for the Sultan of Turkey; I saw his difficulties with the Czar of Russia; his dissensions with the Emperor of Austria; and all those erratic outbreaks which kept his Chancellor busy explaining. But even his Chancellor did not know enough to study the psychology of the greatest force on earth: America.

Before the war, I presume, from time to time you have seen paragraphs in the papers setting forth the Kaiser's aspirations to emulate Frederick the Great. Though anachronistic, there is nothing discreditable in such an ambition; yet members of the household, who like myself, saw William grimacing for half-hours at a time before a mirror hanging by the side of a life-size portrait of Frederick, could not help feeling apprehensive that behind this there was more than vaingloriousness.

As a matter of fact, the monarch of the end of the eighteenth century and his successor of the beginning of the twentieth have as little in common, outwardly and inwardly, as the second Ludwig of Bavaria and the fourteenth Louis of France had. That William,

ocular disproof notwithstanding, insisted upon imagining himself Frederick's counterpart, was but a phase of his monomania of grandeur equivalent to the hallucinations of which his late mad cousin was possessed.

That a general can do everything was one of the Kaiser's pet phrases—because they, "receive their instructions from me."

William said he liked the Sultan as the embodiment of absolutism, as a ruler prepared to rule at the hazard of seeing one-half of his people dead on the ground, that the other half may learn to obey. "If," he continued, "my grand-uncle, Frederick William IV had possessed but a spark of the spirit that lives in the so-called sick man, I should be monarch in the true sense of the word today, though Berlin gutters might have run with blood for weeks in succession during March, '48."

Yet William did not attempt to improve on Frederick William. When in November, Berlin "saw red," he tamely sneaked off to Holland and hired an extra typist to take down his "defense."

No doubt he meant what he said at Frankfort, namely that he would "rather see his forty-two millions of Prussians dead on the battlefield than give up one foot of ground gained by the Franco-German war,"—what are human lives to him?—but as the forty-two millions and some twenty-eight millions more decided differently, he found it convenient to step from the heights of the sublime to the depths of the ridiculous.

His hands red with the blood of forty thousand murdered Christians, the Sultan received a colored photograph representing the imperial family in a loving group,—Kaiser and Kaiserin and all the children.

"My master," our Ambassador, was ordered to say in his presentation speech, "hopes that this simple souvenir may be acceptable to your Majesty as a token of the Kaiser's affection and eternal friendship," massacres or no massacres.

Twice the German envoy had telegraphed Prince Hohenlohe for further advices on this piece of diplomatic business; his first telegram seemed to indicate that he looked upon the picture as a belated valentine gift, or something of the sort.

On being reassured of its up-to-dateness, he wired he would rather resign than carry out so degrading an act after what had happened in Constantinople; but Hohenlohe, a raid of the scandal sure to ensue, persuaded Baron Saurma to withdraw his threat, and so the presentation took place with due ceremony to both Majesties' profoundest satisfaction.

Subsequently there was talk that the Kaiser was well paid for his good offices to the Sultan. Five million francs were said to have come from the Tscheragan Serai, to the *Schloss*, and our court marshals, hoping to profit by this sudden windfall, were in a happy mood in consequence; but their prevailing penury was not relieved, and the customary offering of the Padishah arrived as in former years, only more promptly. Abdul sent William long-maned ponies from Barbary, and our lord repaid his autocratic colleague with some of the choice product of Trakehnen stud.

"Women do not understand about these things," was the Emperor's rejoinder when her Majesty objected to having her likeness and that of the children sent to the "wholesale murderer of Christians." "What do women know about being consequential? These Armenians were rebels, and my friend, the Sultan, treated them as I would treat a mob opposing my authority, any day."

"But," pleaded her Majesty, "Marschall tells me it was primarily a religious riot, the Mussulmans falling on the Giaurs and killing them off like so many sheep."

The Kaiser shrugged his shoulders. "I am shepherd of the Lutheran Christians in Prussia," he said, "those in foreign lands must take care of themselves."

And later he sent Prince Heinrich on "the new

crusade, to uphold the Cross and punish the slayers of Christians in China."

But, then, William had never dined with the Son of Heaven; and that worthy's Viceroy, Li Hung Chang, when he visited Germany, utterly failed to live up to William's expectations.

The craze to "show off" is egoism on its hind legs, —a very different brand from the harmless amusement William found in pronouncing toasts to his grandmother in the words: "I drink to the health of the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, Chief of my First Guard Dragoons," or even from the speech the Kaiser made in deposing Count Waldersee as Chief of the General Staff, when he insinuated that, by burying him in the province "where her Majesty, the Empress, first saw the light," royal honors (instead of a slight) were conferred.

Some of our courtiers excused all the Kaiser did on the plea of impulsiveness, a condition which they take to be an attribute of genius. Whether his egotistical brutality broke up a banquet, as it did when he drove to the Casino of the Guard Dragoons merely to say that as Counts Herbert and Wilhelm Bismarck were in attendance, he, the Kaiser, preferred to eat at home, or whether he spoiled a family reunion by revising the guests' list,—whether he imperiled future politics by accusing a Crown Prince to his father or by making ill-natured remarks about another heir's bride-elect,—these complaisant clawbacks said the sovereign must neither be blamed nor criticized.

But woe to others assuming like privileges! There was Nicholas, Czar-to-be of all the Russias, but merely a gay young gentleman when a visitor at our court.

No wonder a week of state banquets and parades, and parades and state banquets, made him long for less formal amusements.

On the evening when the Kaiser and Kaiserin and the rest of the nation's great were expecting his Imperial

Highness at the palace of the Russian Ambassador, he sent his regrets, adding that he was enjoying himself so hugely, it would be a shame to break up his party.

As we sat down without the guest of honor, William's face was a study: wrath, tempered by surprise, was pictured in every line of it. He showed his annoyance, yet seemed to be incredulous of the slight offered. As her Majesty expressed it, he thought for a time it was all a joke; that anyone in his sober senses should dare to affront him, he refused to believe.

However, even before Roman Punch was served, everybody in the festive chambers knew that the Czaro-vitch was at Duke Gunther's (brother of the Kaiserin) in the Palais Pourtales, whither he had gone at one o'clock, and where a motley array of rakes, marquises and dancing-girls used to convene.

They had a great time, those two royal bachelors and their friends, and when, finally, his Imperial Highness's adjutant reminded him that it was necessary to prepare for supper at the Embassy, Nicholas avowed that he preferred an hour with his Mignon to an eternity with all the German Emperors and Empresses that ever lived.

At the concert, I heard Count Schouvalow whisper to his wife: "The Kaiser insists upon reporting this business to the Czar, with all details, the Empress Frederick's protest and my own notwithstanding. As for Duke Gunther, he told her Majesty that he will kick him out of the army."

The Duke of Schleswig, accordingly, got his walking-papers and Czar Alexander a furious letter, complaining of his son's disregard for the decencies of life and denouncing his proclivities for vice. But twenty-one months later they carried Alexander to the Peter-Paul Cathedral a dead man, and Nicholas, the slurred and despised, mounted the throne of the Northern Empire.

As a flash of genius, too, those amiable pick-thanks

praised the Kaiser's feat at Darmstadt, when standing on the castle balcony with the Czar, he suddenly placed his arm about Nicholas's shoulders, thereby giving the imperial camera man, on watch, a chance for a sensational snapshot. The Kaiser promptly turned the negative over to a Berlin speculator, and soon the show windows offered ocular proof "that the relations between Berlin and St. Petersburg were of the most cordial character."

But when the pictures reached Muscovite dealers, ten days later, a decree of confiscation went forth; the photographs were pronounced apocryphal, and the Russian official telegraph and news companies received orders to "feature this piece of intelligence and give wide publicity to the fact that a fraud had been practiced upon the public."

A great storm was raised when the Czar and Czaritza, then staying in Darmstadt, refused to see the Grand Duke and Duchess of Baden on the plea that their time was all taken up.

"Nicholas must make time for the daughter of the venerable William I," cried our papers. Whereat their Russian Majesties were exceedingly amused.

"That the Czar must do a thing, despite his disinclination," said Nicholas, "is an argument worthy of the 'nation of thinkers.' However, I value my health above the approval of united Germany. Their Royal Highnesses may charge my refusal to see them to the man who invented kissing as part of royal salutations. I would not kiss the Grand Duke or Grand Duchess for all the gold in Siberia—all Siberia's gold ready mined and coined."

Today these squabbles of crowned-heads-that-were sound like echoes of the 18th century. William got offended with "Nicky" and rapped him on the wrists by denouncing him to Papa. Papa died and left "Nicky" in possession. Then "Nicky" went and

smashed William on the head. And now "Nicky" is as dead as Louis XIV, while the Kaiser and Kaiserin are as defunct as mutton, but less useful.

It happened at the banquet held in honor of Li Hung Chang at the Neues Palais. Toward the close of the repast, the Emperor was handed a dispatch. To tear open the envelope, read the message and burst out laughing, was the work of a moment.

These strange antics—they must have been strange indeed in the eyes of a Chinese—the Bismarck of the Yellow Jacket and the three-eyed peacock's feather viewed with wonderment, and William, observing Li's looks ordered the interpreter to inform the Viceroy that the Kaiser's merriment was caused by the news of an important engagement of marriage.

Now Li wanted to know everything whether it be the bottom of a magnum, or a family affair. So he sent word that he would be obliged if his Majesty cared to tell him which of his friends had made a fool of himself.

In answer the Kaiser handed the interpreter the telegram. It announced the betrothal of the Prince of Naples to Princess Helene of Montenegro.

Soon afterward the dinner came to an end, and Li, still puzzling, heard the Kaiser say a few words to Count Eulenburg which made that gentleman laugh even more immoderately than the Kaiser had done.

"See what the joke is, and be sure to get a satisfactory answer at last," demanded the Viceroy, impatiently.

"The Kaiser"—this was the answer brought back—"told Count Eulenburg that the grandmother of Princess Helene of Montenegro had been a chestnut peddler."

What his Majesty really said was: "This one's grandmother was but a street vagabond, peddling chestnuts."

The news from Rome was an awful blow to my mis-

tress, for up to then she had never given up hope that Victor Emmanuel would marry her sister Feo. The Kaiser's brutal joke helped her over the embarrassing situation.

"An excellent bonmot," she exclaimed; "it shall have a place in my diary."

If the saying had but remained between the covers of that precious volume, the key of which rests on her Majesty's heart! But it was thought good enough to become a "winged word" among the friends of the imperial couple, and of course found its way to the Quirinal palace.

Naturally the royal granddaughter of the Street Vagabond was not enthusiastic when William invited her husband, the King of Italy, to commit suicide in August, 1914. And she rejoiced exceedingly when first her father, the King of Montenegro, and later Italy joined the Allies against Austria May 23, 1915, for that meant war against William sooner, or later.

On the whole the Kaiser's notions of making himself loved closely resembled the rattlesnake's, only the rattler is more diplomatic.

Then came that affair with Ambassador Herbette. The representative of France objected to the intimacy that had sprung up between the Kaiser and the French naval attaché, M. de Graucy.

"If you understand your business, you must know that you are nothing but a well-paid and highly ornamental spy," he is reported to have said to de Graucy; "how can you serve your country if you allow yourself to be bamboozled by imperial favors and dazzled by the monarch's amiableness and charm of speech?"

To the Emperor, who had asked him as a personal favor to desist from his resolution to procure M. de Graucy's immediate recall, the brave Herbette made answer: "Parbleu, your Majesty, I insist upon doing my house-cleaning in my own way."

These two speeches are matters of historic record

and I may add that the above version is from the Kaiser's own lips;—I was present when his Majesty reported them to the Empress. What the world does not know, is the double meaning of the Frenchman's allusion to house-cleaning. An ambassador, like other great lords, has two families, a personal and an official one. De Graucy belonged to the latter, and Herbette disowned him as soon as so extreme a measure seemed called for. But by that time stories of the Kaiser's faible for Madame Herbette had reached the ears of her husband.

Scant secrecy had been observed. Frequenters of Pariser Platz, where the Embassy was located, had noticed the Emperor's phaeton and pair in front of the hotel for half-hours at a time, day by day, and had talked about it, first to curse William's apparent zeal in "running after the French"; afterward, when they learned of the existence of a beautiful woman in the case, to smile approvingly and wish the sovereign success.

At court, the ice had been broken by a remark of the Princess of Meiningen, who said one day, when the Kaiser's love for France was discussed: "Yes, and I understand he has the good taste to be wanting in respect to a Frenchwoman of esprit whom we all know."

There was probably nothing at all in this talk, yet, whether there was or not, Herbette decided to stop it. When invitations for a court ball arrived, he accepted, but three days before the affair came off, he caused Madame to send her regrets announcing that his Excellency alone would be able to do himself the honor to attend the ball.

House marshal Baron Lyncker happened to have business in the Kaiser's study when the perfumed note bearing the ambassadress's initials in silver arrived.

"His Majesty," he says, "tore open the better, and scanning its contents, exclaimed: 'Advise Eulen-

burg that the ball is off. He must at once recall the invitations.'

"At your Majesty's orders," said the dutiful Lyncker, "but as the greater part of the delicacies for the buffets are already in the hands of the chefs and pastry-cooks, while the sweetmeats were delivered a few hours ago, what is your Majesty's pleasure with respect to these goods?"

The Emperor had listened with every indication of impatience.

"Never mind, the stuff that cannot be used in the house may be sent to the hospitals," he said. Then, walking straight up to him and staring with flaming eyes into space, the Kaiser continued: "Do you know why I disappoint these several thousand invited persons? Because I cannot permit Herbette to again set foot in my house. He wants to come, but he shall not. Indeed, I would rather see this *Schloss* in ruins than spend an evening with him in the same room."

He read Madame Herbette's letter a second time, and acting as if a sudden thought had struck him, added: "The news that de Graucy is to go has just been confirmed. It is a direct insult and scandal. I will not rest until Herbette is made to leave Berlin."

A few years before he died, the Czar Alexander had founded a sort of Imperial and Royal Hague Conference or Tribunal at his summer resort, his father-in-law's palace of Fredensborg, near Copenhagen. William, of course, was most anxious to be of these gatherings of monarchs and kings of the future, among them the Prince and Princess of Wales, the King of Sweden, the Hesses, several Orleans and Bourbons, etc., and my mistress had her hands full explaining why the Kaiser did not join these royalties. She asserted that the increasing volume of business made it necessary for his Majesty to pass by Copenhagen.

But I have it on the authority of a high official in the Russian Embassy that Czar Alexander distinctly

refused to be disturbed in his retreat by "that young man," while, at the same time, the Danish Minister in Berlin hinted that Queen Louise was not well enough to stand the excitement of such visits. It saved the Danish court a pot of money besides, for the Kaiser's suite was seldom less than sixty head strong, even when he travelled in semi-state. Imagine that gang, with appetites whetted by a sea-voyage, descending upon the little island court, which, though not ashamed to exhibit its cocoanut matting in the royal corridors and its crazy little oil-lamps before the immensely wealthy Russians, must needs brush up and go on to no end of expense to make as good a showing as possible before these shoddy Berliners. Besides, the Kaiser always expected that some military or naval display would be especially arranged for him.

But not only poor kings like Christian, objected to these imperial invasions; at Rome and Vienna, not to mention the small German courts, the cry, "The Prussians are coming!" was sure to cause a panic.

Once the Kaiser returned in high dudgeon from Vienna, whither he had gone unexpectedly to attend the funeral of Archduke Albrecht. Albrecht had been a good hater of Prussia all his life, and if his ideas had prevailed in 1870-1871 Austria would have fallen foul of the Prussian rear and flank.

This had been repeatedly discussed in the press, and, in view of the circumstance, Emperor Francis Joseph was loath to invite the Kaiser to the funeral. But William argued: "here is an event upon which the eyes of the world will be riveted for a day at least,—a pompous funeral,—where one may cut a figure."

William rushed off to Austria pellmell, but not without having previously instructed the overseer of the official scribes, to proclaim from the housetops that the German Emperor had magnanimously forgotten all about the late Archduke's evil intentions, and had gone to pay his imperial respects to the dead foe.

The first effect of Wilhelm's surprise party was the withdrawal from the obsequies of the dead man's brother-in-law, the Bavarian Prince Regent. Luitpold, had no ambition to walk behind William. The *Hofburg* officials were thrown into the utmost confusion.

The place of chief mourner had been reserved for Francis Joseph; now there were two kaisers to be treated with equal distinction.

However, the funeral passed off without a hitch; but William soon found that Francis Joseph, was not in the humor to talk politics. He would neither argue about Faure, nor about the question of the renewal of the Triple Alliance.

This the Emperor himself reported on coming home, blaming everybody but himself for the rebuffs experienced. What he did not tell (the Empress learned of it later through her brother, who had it from the Princess Philip of Coburg) was that Francis Joseph treated him with so much coolness that his Majesty left his apartments in the *Hofburg* and took up his quarters with Philip Eulenburg, at the German Embassy, where the object of the visit was lost sight of at an informal dinner enlivened by songs and dances where hired vaudeville stars and the ambassadorial troubadour himself performed.

And that happened a year after William had called Francis Joseph, at Pola, "my best friend, with whom I am united in sincerest friendship, and who is my most loyal companion in arms." The King of Saxony, had to act as peacemaker between the two Emperors.

"As a querulous and obstreperous servant," Chancellor von Caprivi was sent back into obscurity—and Prince Hohenlohe (Uncle Chlodwig) was appointed in his stead, whereupon our palace once more became a place where one could eat and sleep in comfort, go to bed at stated hours, and set about one's morning toilet without fear of being called away at the most inopportune moment to decipher dispatches, run errands com-

pletely out of one's sphere, or help to dry the royal mistress's tears.

It looked so at least, but courtiers propose, and our dear relations dispose. Hohenlohe had not been in office a week when the fifty-six other Hohenlohes (find them enumerated in the *Almanach de Gotha*), fortified and backed by their one hundred and sixty-odd grandmothers, mothers, aunts, wives and daughters, began pestering their Majesties with allusions to the great discrepancy between their kinsman's modest stipend as chancellor and his big salary as Emperor's lieutenant in Alsace—a difference of a round hundred thousand marks (\$25,000) per annum.

"It is impossible from the family's standpoint, to permit such a sacrifice without indemnification," they whined.

"The Prince belongs, above all, to his kindred, whose glory and prosperity he is bound to help to increase. And how can he live up to his duties as chief of the first branch of the younger line of the Hohenlohe-Waldenburg-Schillingsfursts if he throws away a fortune every year of his life?"

"Uncle Chlodwig," so ran another line of argument, "is not a gay bachelor, but a father and grandfather, an uncle and cousin times innumerable. Dozens of Hohenlohes, besides his own children, depend for part of their income, at present or after his death, upon the noble old man, and to all these the enormous curtailment of salary is nothing short of a calamity."

A third batch of correspondents bluntly stated that "inasmuch as Hohenlohe had consented to accept the Chancellorship to please the Emperor, his Majesty was in honor bound to make good his pecuniary losses."

Epistles of this sort kept Augusta Victoria in a turmoil, the Emperor having refused to be disturbed after perusing one or two of the kind.

Thereafter letters postmarked from any city or place where the "damned Hohenlohe curmudgeons re-

side," had to be delivered to the Kaiserin, whether addressed to William personally or not.

The adjutants left rags of that kind by the handful morning after morning at the Empress's rooms, and her Majesty's morbid curiosity, made her not only notice these grievances and accusations, but study them, ponder over them. Only once have I seen her unconcerned when thus employed,—at the suggestion that Uncle Chlodwig needed a big salary, in order to live in the style befitting his rank.

"Uncle Chlodwig a pauper!" she cried. "That is news, indeed; a poor man owning residential palaces in several capitals, and castles and country-houses all over Germany and in Austria!"

"Of course, the statement is ridiculous," said Baron von Mirbach; "but it is a fact, nevertheless, that his Grace has been sorely disappointed with respect to his Russian properties, or rather his wife's Russian inheritance, the Wittgenstein domains. The law prohibiting foreigners from holding property in Russia has forced him to dispose of many miles of territory at ruinous prices."

"I know," said the Empress, "and am glad that the Kaiser promised to intervene with the Czar on that account. 'Nicky,' I am sure, will arrange matters satisfactorily."

"The Prince's relatives seem to know nothing of such an understanding," I remarked.

"Of course not," replied her Majesty, "for it is a state secret which, when I come to think of it, I should have more respected. But now that it is out, let me add that my husband's promise to secure a favorable settlement of those Russian affairs did more than all other arguments toward persuading the Prince to accept the Chancellorship."

Poor Nicky! He was tireless in arranging unlawful matters for his relatives and friends. Indeed he worked at that game until he himself was made an end of—

lawfully or unlawfully, no one seems to know at this writing.

On the eve of the day when the Kaiser said at the swearing-in of recruits: "by donning the king's coat you have become something aristocratic," an unsigned letter admonished him in this style:

"Your Majesty ought really not be so hard on Hohenlohe on the salary question, considering that you have but to ask your wife's mother about the good uses Hohenlohe makes of his wealth. Indeed, if it had not been for 'Cousin Chlodwig,' the Duchess Adelaide and her children, among them the present German Empress, might have gone hungry many a day while the Augustenburger was fighting for his throne."

That evening the princely couple of Meiningen, Duke Gunther and the Hereditary Princess of Hohenzollern, took supper at court, and to these relatives the Kaiser showed the letter.

"I am thinking about ways and means to stifle this new scandal," he explained. "The report—whether true or not is immaterial—that the German Empress's mother accepted charity from a Hohenlohe must not be allowed to spread, and I see but one way to prevent it: those salary-grabbers must be appeased; the income of the Emperor's lieutenant must be restored to the Chancellor.

"I am going to grant Hohenlohe an annual augmentation of his salary, amounting to one hundred thousand marks out of the imperial emergency fund."

This was a fund appropriated by the Reichstag for the benefit of crippled soldiers, widows and orphans, and of the victims of fire, storm and elementary misfortunes, and the Kaiser gave one-twentieth part of it to his rich and able-bodied uncle!

Some three months later the *Berlin Post*, known as the organ of the foreign ministries, published a story purporting to correct a paragraph printed in an obscure Socialistic sheet, hinting at a conspiracy between

Kaiser and Chancellor to defraud a public fund. And, with the clumsiness that distinguishes the official press, the *Post*, denied the conspiracy, and then calmly told the damning truth, namely, that his Majesty, in recognition of Prince Hohenlohe's distinguished services, his patriotism and disinterestedness, had been "graciously pleased to grant him an extra subvention from the charity fund which was at his disposal."

Consequently the Kaiser appeared at supper with a darkened brow. He was most ungracious toward her Majesty; and all the ladies, myself included, were treated to sarcastic remarks that often approached downright rudeness.

"A thunderstorm is gathering—I wonder who will catch it?" remarked my neighbor. At that moment the chasseur handed the Kaiser a letter bearing a great official seal.

"There," said he to the Empress, after perusing the missive. "Hohenlohe thanks me for my good intentions, and relinquishes, at the first blast from the enemy's camp, the fortune I threw into his lap."

It's hardly necessary to add that Hohenlohe was no Prussian junker; a Prussian junker would have hung on to the pound of flesh, the product of imperial malfeasance, no matter how many women and children of the people would starve that he and his might have more than they could digest.

I have, practically, been an attaché of the Prussian court all my life and never once heard of an analogous case. Our big politicians took all they could get and when the Kaiser was graciously pleased to rob a public fund to fill their ravenous pouches, there was no smell of thievery, only one more whimsical manifestation of the Right Divine, or species of organized royal appetite.

This the Kaiser's mother-in-law, Duchess Adelaide of Schleswig, loved to ridicule along with William's other pretensions, while on his part William loathed the Duchess and knowingly would not have her in his

house. But on account of the Kaiser's travel mania, her Highness was sometimes able to spend one, two or even three weeks at court.

Among other peculiarities she indulged to excess, was the wash craze, not a craze for cleanliness,—for she would as soon jump into the fire as immerse herself in a tub of water,—but a passion for wetting different parts of her body and rubbing them down.

“I have brought my daily ablution into a system,” she told me once, “and to that end divided my body into twenty sections. The cleansing of each one of them requires a complete toilet-set,—bowl, pitcher, soap-dish and towel.”

That is one of the reasons why her visits were so much dreaded in the palace. I have already spoken about the inadequacy of the supply of certain requisites at our court. Now imagine one of our guests of perhaps a dozen or more demanding half a store full of toilet-sets for her use alone. Our court marshal groaned and the house marshals swore when the Duchess of Schleswig was announced. They had to “find” the toilet sets, that is, they must borrow from the royal porcelain factory.

The different wash-sets were placed on a succession of tables, and as soon as she arrived at her chambers, the Duchess had each pitcher, bowl and soap-dish numbered according to a schedule she carried around everywhere and guarded as a treasure. Number one is for her right foot, number four for her left hip, number seven for her right bosom, etc., the even numbers for the left, the uneven for the right side of her body. And woe to the chambermaid who upset this order of things by placing a left side bowl with a right-sided pitcher, which might happen easily enough, seeing that most of them were of the same color and pattern.

On one occasion her Majesty had given orders that only fourteen toilet-sets be placed in her Highness's apartments, somebody having told her that her mother

might be altogether weaned of her craze if once she could be persuaded to get along with less than the accustomed number.

Mother and daughter inspected the rooms together and afterward took dinner in private, her Highness withdrawing at an early hour on the plea of indisposition. In truth, she burned to see whether her first casual observation as to the lack of wash-basins had been correct. Miss von Roeder her maid of honor said next day that the Duchess, as soon as she was out of her Majesty's sight, began to run, arriving at her apartment breathless and excited.

"Help me count,—all of you!" she shrieked. The china sets were counted once, they were counted twice; a third of the prescribed number were missing.

Duchess Adelaide clutched at her hair. "Whose work is this?" she cried; "I have had twenty-one bowls and pitchers as long as I can think, and my daughter would be the last person in the world to deprive me of comfort. Who took them away?" and she was about to throw herself upon the maids, who were ready to prepare her for bed. At that moment a happy thought occurred to Roeder. "The *Schloss* is full to overflowing," she said: "probably the court marshal running short of stock, took some of our china away."

Curiously enough, the Duchess accepted this explanation, and promised to behave, if her four maids, von Roeder, her daughter, Feo, and the maid of the Princess would lend their wash bowl sets for the night. Next morning she ordered two landaus and sent Miss von Roeder and her dresser to town to buy more toilet-sets.

"If my son-in-law," she said, "is too poor to provide for his guests they must try and augment the shortcomings of his house," adding, disgustedly: "and that calls himself an Emperor!"

"As her Highness pronounced these words, she threw her sponge into bowl number eleven," reports Roeder,

who also volunteered some interesting information respecting the section of the Duchess's anatomy labeled XI.

The seven wash-sets were smuggled into her Highness's apartment in paper boxes to hoodwink the servants, and were then placed in the Princess Feo's and von Roeder's rooms, so the Empress might not see them when she paid her daily visit to the Duchess.

Adelaide used to indulge in the wash craze twice daily, before second breakfast and after supper; sometimes, on her "critical days," she rose as early as half-past four to commence operations. One day, the mania seized her at 5 A.M. She jumped out of bed and, without taking time to put on even a petticoat, ran into the corridor, shouting for the girls to bring water. The noise awoke the Princess Feo and Roeder, who tried to persuade her Highness to go back to bed, but the old woman turned upon them with a flood of invectives that would have done honor to a fish-wife. When, finally, the overseer of the corridor arrived, he found three half-naked women engaged in a fierce battle, the two younger ones trying to force the other to re-enter the apartment, while she clamored for hot water at the top of her voice. "Water, water, I am dying for water! Only nine pitchers are filled! Give me twelve pitchers of hot water!"

In the Empress's room conversation once turned upon the subject of complexions. "To what, do you think, does Feo ascribe her muddied skin?" asked the Duchess in her usual blunt manner, and all of us began to look sharply to our needlework. Her Highness repeated the question, and then answered it herself: "Because," she grinned—"that is Feo's explanation—because I won't let her sleep at night, and awaken her early in the morning. Now I should like to know whether I am not entitled to my daughter's company while engaged in my toilet? Roeder and the girls have to sit up while I wash, but Feo is allowed to go to bed,

or remain abed, where I visit her from time to time for a snatch of talk. I mean to entertain her, as well as myself, and this ungrateful child says I am muddling her complexion."

If for some physical or mental reasons the ablutions fail to quiet her Highness, she has paroxysms of rage that seriously threaten her surroundings. Then she smashes furniture, howls like mad and fells upon her maids if she gets the chance. As a rule, though, her girls are selected with a view to bodily strength, and it has been asserted that they give tit for tat whenever their mistress essays to maltreat them. It would not be the first time that a royal lunatic was subjected to violence. George III of England was soundly thrashed by his valet, whenever, during his intermittent fits of lunacy, the latter got a chance to even up things. For every fistcuff the man had got when his master was in seeming possession of his senses, he kicked George thrice when the latter was strait-jacketed. Such is human nature.

On one of her visits, the Duchess brought in her retinue two newly-engaged maids; they were to do night service for the first time at the Neues Palais, while another set had to attend her Highness's morning wash. Whether these girls had not been properly prepared for the ordeal, or, performed their work badly, I do not know; there was an awful rumpus toward twelve o'clock, and next morning it was learned that the girls had run from the building, never stopping until commanded to do so on pain of death by a sentinel.

Then they threw themselves on their knees, and screamed for mercy. The poor creatures thought they were in a Bedlam: their royal mistress, finding herself short one pitcher of water, had suddenly metamorphosed into a fiend incarnate, had assailed them biting, scratching and throttling.

Miss von Roeder alone knows how to manage the

Duchess. She is very energetic, strong-minded and strong-limbed, and capable of enforcing orders at all hazards. Once when the Duchess Adelaide expressed a desire to have her groom in the parlor, Roeder replied with her usual "No, thank you."

"But I will have John in the salon, or anywhere else, if I see fit. Am I not the Duchess of Schleswig-Holstein?"

"I know," answered Roeder doggedly, "but that notwithstanding, your Highness will not entertain a hostler where I am."

"You impertinent cat," cried the Duchess. "You think you can give me the end of your tongue because that tu-penny son-in-law of mine encourages you." At the same time she carried a chair to the window, opened it and placing one foot on the sill, added: "Now will you let me have John because, unless you ring for him at once, I will jump out."

Roeder never quivered. Nonchalantly waving her hand toward the window, she said: "Jump, your Highness, and I will enjoy a holiday. I will have my salary for life, you know." Her Highness did jump, but onto the floor. "Damn you," she hissed, "I would rather live forever than do you a good turn."

There is no denying the Duchess was at times rather eccentric, yet in some respects she showed good judgment. For instance, she always referred to her son-in-law as "that d—— pig-dog, Kaiser."

And how she loved the Prussians! Here follows a specimen of her table talk on that subject:

"At the Princess of Courland's," I heard her say to the Kaiser at luncheon one day, "I saw the Countess Sobieska and recognized her at once as an old friend, though I haven't seen her for thirty years and more."

"My dear, I said to her, I think I first met you at the Empress Eugenie's in that dear Paris, before those confounded Prussians drove her from her throne as they did my husband."

“And why, pray, did you permit your two daughters to marry confounded Prussians?” demanded Sobieska.

“Because at the time we were too confounded poor to pitch the pig-dogs out of doors,” I told her, and, (raising her voice) “that’s God’s truth.”

It may have been—but William didn’t enjoy the story any better for that.

CHAPTER XVI

In 1903, when Crown Prince Wilhelm had just entered upon his twenty-first year, it was noted with alarm that the young man showed no inclination whatever for women's society.

At an age when a Hohenzollern is in duty bound to think of founding a family, young William behaved strangely like the late lamented Alexander of Servia before the Maschin taught him the gentle art popularized by a daughter of France who became an Abbess, but would hate to be a mother.

The Eulenburg scandal was but gossip then, though court and brothel, public bath and race track reeked with its putrescent abominations. There had been no attempt to hunt down the Unspeakables, nevertheless it was hinted that the perverse character of the Crown Prince's tutor, Count William Hohenau, might be responsible.

Whether true or false I do not profess to know, certain it is that young Wilhelm's haughty contempt for girls, royal and otherwise, gave palpitations to many a proud mamma, while causing ditto fathers to smile their long, watery "I told you so."

As the husband is usually the last to see the horns a clever wife plants on his brow, so William *père* was behind the rest in noticing William *fil's* sexual indifference, or peculiarities. But, when at last he did take notice, the palace could scarcely hold him.

"What! he, who jumped from the saddle onto the nuptial couch after a Sheridan ride, the father of a milk-sop without manly desires, prowess and endurance?"

"Madam," he roared, addressing the startled *Kaiserin*, "tell the Crown Prince what kind of hus-

band I am, that I never, never disappointed you, nor any other woman for that matter."

"Willy, how can you be so indelicate?" faltered Dona.

"Indelicate?" cried the Kaiser, "dainty scruples when the interests of the Monarchy are at stake! Did the King of Hungary consider such when he commanded Johanna of Naples to consummate her marriage with his son Andreas instantly before his very eyes and those of the court? And when Frederick the Great ordered the Queen of Poland to be lifted bodily from the state papers she thought safe only under her royal posterior—though the Majesty pleaded absence of petticoats and unmentionables—was that an act of fastidiousness or of policy?"

"I repeat: Indelicate or not, your son must be taught to be a father and husband, and, if you refuse to act, Dona, I am sure the Poppe will undertake the job with pleasure."

And William bounced out of the room, convinced that he would have his own way, as usual.

An hour later the King of Württemberg arrived and William *fil's* failings were temporarily forgotten in the paltry routine of official ceremonies: State reception, ditto visits, ditto dinner and, horror of horrors, the inevitable gala performance at the royal play house.

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"*Haussez les mains*," cried the Emperor in the evening, when he saw his guest and Rosa Poppe in the wings during an *entre-act* of the tiresome tragedy played in his honor,—"*Haussez les mains*, I say."

His Suabian Majesty is a modest man. He reddened and replied evasively: "I am no Victor Emmanuel," referring, of course, to *Re galantuomo*, the grandfather of the present incumbent of Italy's throne.

"Granted," laughed William, "I know you to be a

Joseph of the first water, but I also know my little girl. How long have I known you, Rosa? ”

The actress bowed low and replied in tones of entreaty: “I must beg leave from Your Majesty and His Majesty of Württemberg to withdraw. The part I am playing to-night does not admit of frivolities. No, I must go,—to remain would unfit me for the rest of the performance.”

Notabene, Hebbel’s Judith was on the boards, *Fräulein* Poppe essaying the title rôle. Judith and *haussez les mains*, heaven storming German idealism and bawdy house pleasantries! Only a “Prussian swine could think of such a combination,” said the disgusted Württemberger afterward.

Meanwhile, the Kaiser had taken hold of Rosa’s plump arm, caressing the pink and white flesh, yet holding it as in a vise.

“I won’t let you go until you answer my question: How long have you had the honor of my intimate acquaintance?” There was a sinister emphasis on the qualifying word.

“If Your Majesty insists,” faltered the actress, “more than six years.”

“And did ‘Papa’ ever disappoint ‘Baby’?” continued the Kaiser.

Rosa looked appealingly at the Württemberg Majesty, hoping that he might come to her rescue. But, William of Stuttgart was not fool enough to spoil his powerful namesake’s fun. It might cost him, or his people, dear in the negotiations then under way.

“Come,” insisted the Kaiser, “in all these six years did ‘Papa’ ever disappoint ‘Baby’?”

“Never,—but now Your Majesty must allow me to go.” And Poppe tore herself loose and ran into her dressing room, bolting the door.

“Did you hear that, Billie?” cried the Kaiser exultingly. “Never missed coming up to the lady’s expectations in six years, and, *sub rosa*, the Poppe has a

ravenous appetite. This in addition to my home duties—seven boys (the Kaiser always refers to his daughter as a boy). Confess that the House of Suabia is not in it with the Hohenzollerns.”

The King of Württemberg, who is childless and does not care to have the fact rubbed in, tried to pass the matter off, but William insisted on harping on the disagreeable subject during the rest of the evening, even before the Empress, when the pair returned to the Royal box.

Boasting of mistresses in his wife's presence is what the Kaiser calls testifying to his complete independence of domestic fetters.

Rosa Poppe happened to be his only flame at the Royal play house and Auguste Victoria was condemned to see him bow familiarly to her whenever the actress appeared on the stage. If he had seven or a dozen mistresses on the theater's pay-roll, he would use the dozen, or more, to proclaim his libertinage every time they came before the footlights, whether his wife was there or not. As to *haussez les mains*, the coarse witticism is a standing joke with the Kaiser and no green boy boasting of his first conquest could be more indiscreet than the Majesty of Germany at the age of fifty.

As all royal visitors to Berlin must submit to the inevitable gala performance of some tiresome play William considers divine, so none are spared the information that His Majesty occasionally spends an afternoon in Rosa's *boudoir*. There is no lack of details, either. The Kaiser likes to describe his “girl's” charms minutely; no single good point is omitted.

Once he pictured Rosa's ponderous buttocks to his mother-in-law in order to tease the old girl.

“So she is putting on flesh, is she?” cried the late Duchess. “None of your doings, though, I reckon, for she told me you never gave her a copper.”

“Well, she has her salary, which I increase at regu-

lar intervals," answered the Kaiser with a frown, and changed the subject.

A royal mistress deriving no other benefits than the wages for her services on the stage is certainly a novelty. As to the increased pay granted her, I understand it barely covers the cost of the perfumes and delicacies His Majesty expects to find at *Fräulein Poppe's*. There must be baths of cologne or champagne; Poppe is supposed to keep the finest brands of cigars and cigarettes, liqueurs galore and books which the moral Majesty durst not have in his own house, yet Rosa stoutly maintains that her imperial lover even refuses to leave a little *backsheesh* for expenses on the mantelpiece when he departs.

The actress is corroborated by a courtier who often attends His Majesty on his expeditions into the alcove. "He is as mean as Philip of Coburg, with whom Paris demi-mondaines refuse to sit at table, since he never offers even a bottle of wine by way of recompense," says this authority.

The remark recalls a story told at her former husband's expense by Princess Louise.

"On one of his frequent trips to Paris, Philip tried to escape from a gay flat without loosening his purse strings," says the Royal Highness, "and when the girl remonstrated, 'My dear,' he cried, 'you ought to consider yourself well paid by the distinction the presence of a Royal Prince conferred upon your establishment.'"

"'Distinction, indeed,' replied Celeste, 'I couldn't borrow five francs on it.'"

"'But, I say it's worth a thousand francs, at the very least,' insisted Philip, edging toward the door.

"'I will take you by your word,—by halves,' said the girl. 'Lest you pay me five hundred francs cash, I will place under my name at the door the title "*Titille de S. A. le Prince Philip de Coburg.*"'

“ ‘I shall have it torn down by the police,’ cried the Prince.

“ ‘And I shall have it replaced day by day, and besides, send out ten thousand visiting cards with the announcement.’

“The Prince paid the five hundred francs.”

CHAPTER XVII

The morning after disgracing Rosa Poppe before King William, the Kaiser was in the saddle at an early hour. Even before his bath he had called up "Phili" Eulenburg, appointing a *rendezvous* near Castle Bellevue in the *Thiergarten*. The friends met half way.

"Heard of the Harrisons lately?" William fairly shouted the question, as "Phili," with a graceful curtsey parried his mount.

"Not since one of them killed poor Alfred. After crowning their career of wickedness in right royal style, they vanished, temporarily, at least."

The Ambassador referred to the son and heir of the late Duke of Saxe-Coburg, *ci devant* of Edinburgh, who perished miserably at the age of twenty-five, wrecked by debaucheries of which his adventures with the Harrisons formed a single, but fateful link.

The Harrisons—let us see—there were five of them, I believe, seemingly all of the same age—first saw the light in Copenhagen. Their notion of stagecraft and life they imbibed on New York's Great White Way, highroad to vice. Paris treated them on an equal footing with her own Cléo de Mèrodes and Liane de Pugeys before these ladies became grandmothers, and Berlin fell on their white necks, because their wardrobe was at Strassburg when they made their *début* at the Kaiser's capital.

For a moment it looked as if the Harrisons were destined to be the original *femmes nues* of the modern stage, but Lona, the eldest, who had been *Unter den Linden* before, knew her Berliners too well to give them more than a finger.

Each of the sisters carried in her handbag several

pairs of fillibeg-dreadnaughts of the finest *batiste*, beautifully furbelowed and lace-trimmed, flower bedizened, tucked fore and aft and slashed and appliquéd and what not, yet so flimsy, withal, one might pull the things through a child's bracelet without touching the gold.

There were diaphanous corsets and covers to match, —latest Paris design.

Lona went to the nearest haberdashery and bought two hundred yards of narrow ribbons, half pink, half baby blue,—sixty feet of each per head.

They set the town wild with their ounce of gauze and tulle and lace and the half pound of ribbons, by their young flesh tints and the studied carelessness of non-concealment they affected. Next morning all the court marshals of all the Highnesses in Berlin sent word to Lona, Sophie, Olga, Gertrude and Ethel that their "sublime master would be pleased to offer the sisters an engagement at the palace," etc., etc.

Be sure, young Alfred of Saxe was the first to put in his bid.

Alas! this offer of riches for favors proved his death warrant. English, Russian, French, Slav, and German women he had loved with impunity; these tiny American will-o'-wisps—all quivering flesh and devilishness—proved his undoing. The Harrisons were finally banished from Berlin because Lona, on one special occasion, changed her costume for Alfred's, donning the latter's, *i. e.*, the imperial army uniform.

If she had only taken away her own toggery all might have been well, but Alfred kept it, for a consideration, and, henceforth, he was "the Harrison" for the Eulenburgs, Hohenaus, Lynars and the rest of the Unspeakables, some of whom have since been disgraced. He died in a straitjacket, poor, wild boy.

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To return to William and Eulenburg cantering

along the parkways, one impatient because his *maître de plaisir* had been unsuccessful for once to render the wished-for account, the other cudgeling his brain for ways and means to please the august personage at his side.

As to the Harrisons—unless swallowed by the earth—the diplomatic service would hunt them up and, this failing, the police would. But it would take time, and William, as very evident from his manner, was not in the temper to brook delay.

“May I venture to ask my imperial friend—”

“Oh, I don’t want the baggage myself,” interrupted the Kaiser brusquely, “I inquired for *Monsieur, mon fils*. Devil take the Crown Prince, he is of an age when he needs an American girl worse than his mamma.”

A shadow passed over Eulenburg’s face. He bit his lip and pulled nervously on the reins. But a moment later he was all smiles again.

“His Imperial Highness!” he cried; “charmed if I dared hope to be of the slightest service to the excellent young man. Indeed,” he added with his accustomed exaggeration, “I would fain be his Dubois, if Your Majesty commands.”

“Prove it by arranging a trial marriage for him, one big with results.” William laughed at the double *entendre*.

“Phili” joined in as a matter of course, then grew serious.

“Results?” he repeated, “not for the Harrisons, may it please Your Majesty. I know someone better, a quiet little girl, likewise of the blood republican—”

“Her name—who is she?” In his eagerness the Kaiser drove his horse hard against Eulenburg’s side, squeezing the Count’s right leg.

“Phili” raised himself in the stirrups, bent over the imperial master and whispered.

The Kaiser repeated the name, rolling it over his tongue.

"By George," he cried, "'Phili,' Dubois' mantle has indeed descended upon thy fair shoulders, to adopt your own phraseology. Hanged if you don't deserve to be a cardinal."¹

He wheeled around abruptly, turning his charger's head Berlin-ward.

"Quick," he cried, "if we hurry a bit we will catch Huelsen at breakfast. I shall explain, and he shall procure you a *tête-à-tête* with the Miss this afternoon. You will attend to the rest, but no rash promises, if you please. A life contract at my opera if necessary; yes, and I will throw in the title of Royal Chamber Singer if she insists, but no money consideration beyond expenses—liberal expenses," he added in rather dubious style.

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The ignoble bargain, conceived in licentiousness and executed with true regal brutality, was struck within twenty-four hours after William and Eulenburg rode through Brandenburg gate. *Le droit de seigneur* may be dead with respect to peasant girls; in the case of prima donnas and actresses it is as much alive now as in the days when Philip d'Orleans was Regent of France, Grand Turk of the Paris Opera seraglio and foster father of the Mississippi bubble.

Here was an American virgin in the flower of her youth, struggling to obtain a foothold in the most difficult of professions.

"Make her embrace the oldest," commanded the Majesty, turned procurer. It was done as promptly as if he had said: "Fetch me another cup of tea."

¹ Dubois, a simple *abbé*, was originally tutor to Duke Philip of Orleans, Regent of France during the minority of Louis XV. He earned his pupil's gratitude by acting as purveyor to the young Duke's vices, and this abominable trade he continued when the Duke married and, subsequently, became ruler of France. It would be foolish to deny that Dubois was a man of great mental powers, an adroit politician and a successful prime minister.

In due time the Crown Prince's friends congratulated him on his "conquest," while the patrons of the Royal Opera House saw less and less of the popular alto.

"The little matter of being a month or so *enceinte* is no excuse for persistently shirking her duties," protested the Intendant.

"In Miss ——'s case, close both eyes," replied William; "the Crown Prince and his American girl promised themselves a perfect brat, even if each hair on his head has to be made separately."

Well, William junior's baby proved a lusty youngster and his father a true Hohenzollern.

If the child had been a girl, doubt as to the Crown Prince's prowess might have lingered with royal mammas, but a boy, a knight of the trousers!

How strangely like the Chinese is the average German woman! Seeing the world through her husband's spectacles (kindly furnished by the authorities), she frowns on newly borns unpossessed of the quality of becoming cannon fodder at some future time.

If William junior's "trial kid" (as they called it at Court) had been a *Dirn*, instead of a *Bub*, the Fatherland's women would have esteemed the heir to the throne only half a man, like the pigtailed slit-eye whose attempts at male procreation miscarry. But, having out-Schencked Doctor Schenck, poor false alarm, the young father was heralded a hero everywhere. And the mother?

Pshaw, she was "only an opera singer, anyhow," and the Royal Intendant had orders to take care of her in most "magnificent style."

Her *accoucheur's* fee was paid three months after the "happy event;" the royal apothecary sent a receipted bill "with his compliments;" the Court Marshal and the Intendant of the opera each made out crest and seal-laden papers appointing Miss —— this and

that; her baby's picture was taken "by all-highest command" (cost to Miss —— not a single *pfennig*); the baby died ("so good of the little thing," said both William senior and junior, and footed the undertaker's bill like laughing heirs) and—

La comedia e finita, as far as Miss —— is concerned. Like Rosa Poppe, "she has her salary," her title and the proud consciousness that a Hohenzollern once sat enthroned on the altar of her youthful affections like a monkey on a war elephant. For the rest—she served the King of Prussia and was paid in old Fritz's coin, as the Saxons say, remembering their country's occupation by Frederick the Great.

This phrase is not so well known as its French equivalent, *pour le Roi de Prusse*. Strange, American society women do not seem to know it either, for the score of them who, in late years, worshiped at William's feet—Katherine Clemmons Gould was the first, I believe, to break into the exclusive court-set—the Kaiser esteems no better than his son's "most obedient mare," the aforesaid Miss ——.

Not that he ever conspired against the impregnable virtue of his American women acquaintances—the Eulenburg-Hohenau-Lynar-Buelows may have helped to keep him in the straight path—and, as long as he has bosoms and petticoats to look at, William is, as a rule, quite content. The insult is in the light in which he "sizes them up."

To use his own language:

"These 'Yankee' dames are so different from our native brand, blush at nothing, drink and curse like troopers, and the stories they know! Oh! such stories! Kidderlen never produced better ones."

Idle boast or deliberate calumny—which? And the imperial order to Prince Henry when the latter visited New York: "Above all, as my proxy, make love to ——" (naming an estimable young matron of one of

the leading families). Actions of this kind can only be explained by the truism that heredity breeds kings sometimes, gentlemen—never.

Like most of us, William heard some silly rumors about the lady—before-marriage scandals, bastards of jealousy, envy and mendacity—and glibly decided to use them as a club. His brother was to pave the way to a possible flirtation with Mrs. X. Y. “next summer” and, of course, the preliminaries were to be attended with as much *éclat* as possible.

It’s a habit with kings and lackeys to compromise the women they covet.

CHAPTER XVIII

Turn your gaze upon prisoner No. 2213, engaged at basket-making in the Siegburg county jail, in Rhineland.

The man in dull, dirty gray, with head shorn and fresh sores on his long, aristocratic fingers, declining to become used to manual labor, regulations notwithstanding, is the "most illustrious" Count Johannes von Lynar, sometime Colonel of His Majesty's Horse Guards, brother-in-law of the Grand Duke of Hesse, husband of Princess Anne Elizabeth of Solms, Knight and Commander of many Royal decorations, and member of the Prussian House of Lords by hereditary right.

Small wonder, the former exquisite of the Imperial Court, whose career of corruption was cut short by Harden, cried like a baby when ordered, upon his arrival at Siegburg, to shed his showy uniform, clanking sword and jewel-studded medals.

And it is not surprising at all that he was even more astonished when *Herr* von Lepelle, the gaoler, coldly informed him that he would be treated like any other miscreant,—this after the noble prisoner had been allowed to resign from the army (by the Kaiser's grace) to escape being ingloriously kicked out.

Was "Jeanie," then, completely forgotten by his *quondam* bosom friend, the head of the German Empire?

Not entirely.

While the prison physician is of opinion that ordinary jail fare would prove injurious to the health of prisoner No. 2213, the said No. 2213 is permitted to order his food from a restaurant. But, of course,

what passes for delicacies in a one-horse town of the provinces is very unlike the dainties William's boon companion of old enjoyed at the Imperial table or at his own luxurious palaces and country houses.

To crown his discomforts, prisoner No. 2213 is not permitted, under any circumstances, to partake of stimulants of any kind. Neither will he have the consolation of a pipe or cigar,—smoking is strictly prohibited in prison.

And, *notabene*, No. 2213 was for many years the Kaiser's adviser in matters of old vintages, champagnes, rare brandies and tobacco.

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Le règne des Mignons in Prussia lies dormant then; that it is not as dead as the last Valois, who invented the pretty game of peopling the highest offices in the gift of the crown with harlots in breeches, is entirely due to William's initiative who, by his Chancellor, declared in the Reichstag that the Unspeakables' names were only temporarily dropped from the Court visiting list.

"As soon as the innocence of these gentlemen is established, they will be restored to the honors and privileges now held in abeyance," said Prince Buelow.

Meanwhile two—Lynar and Eulenburg—suffered themselves to be compromised in such fashion that escape by official favoritism, or Imperial command, was out of all question, but only Lynar was punished. An accommodating judge gave Eulenburg sick leave for an indefinite period, permitting him to retire to Liebenberg. He died in 1921.

Count Lynar in his gray smock, cutting *Frankfurters* with a leaden spoon, affords a terrible lesson to favorites of Royalty that neglect to bolster and fortify their nest with written proofs of the master's connivance in the vices they practice, particularly when the incriminated action happens to be *le vice allemand*,

which designation is the latest French pleasantry launched against the Court of Berlin.

The Counts Fritz and William von Hohenau, Prince "Phili" Eulenburg, General Count Kuno von Moltke and others took the precaution. Siegburg, therefore, has no terrors for them. With their correspondence safely vaulted in the Bank of England, they can afford to defy the Courts, the newspapers and public opinion.

As to the main culprit, chief of the Royal Prussian Court Black Leg Society, also known as Round Table and *Camarilla*—as to "Phili" Eulenburg, the preceding chapters offer diverse side lights, but a few biographical notes, however incomplete, seem necessary to a thorough understanding of his character.

Here we have a chartered libertine whom the Kaiser raised from the position of an obscure Councillor of Legation to the greatest honors in the land, whom he enriched at the taxpayers' expense by various grants and, finally, made practical overseer of the whole German diplomatic corps.

William erected his own statue in Eulenburg's palace yard, conferred upon him the title of Prince and appointed him Member of the House of Lords and Privy Councillor.

A wing of Liebenberg Castle, communicating with "Phili's" apartments, was set aside for William's own Imperial use,—in short, he showered his male strumpet, up to the very day of the Harden publications, with every favor in his gift.

As stated, Eulenburg was Third Secretary of Legation in Munich when the Kaiser came to the throne. Soon afterward they met at Castle Schlobitten, the seat of Count, now Prince, Richard Dohna, an honest man, of fine moral sensibilities, who stigmatizes the part he unwittingly played by this chance introduction as "the crowning folly of his life, never to be sufficiently atoned for."

Less than a month after the meeting at Schlobitten,

the unknown diplomat's appointment as Minister to Oldenburg was gazetted and two years later—Eulenburg having in the meantime attended the Kaiser on his Northland trip—we find him Ambassador at a Royal Court, Stuttgart.

Towards *fin-de-siècle* he held the more important post of Ambassador to Bavaria and, until 1902, acted as the Kaiser's representative in Vienna when he was not dancing attendance upon William in Berlin, at his hunting boxes or on his travels.

Eulenburg had little besides his salary to bless himself with during these early years, for Liebenberg, bought with his wife's money, yielded no revenue to speak of.

In 1898, however, he inherited the domain of Hertefeld, in Rhineland, with an income of quite one hundred thousand marks per year. Thereupon, the Kaiser created him successively Baron of Hertefeld, Count von Sandels and Prince, with the appellation of Serene Highness.

And, after the late Baron Nathan Rothschild—all the Unspeakables called him "Nathie"—made the new "*Altesse*" heir to a couple of millions of francs—the wages of sin abominable—the Kaiser added the title of "Right Honorable Privy Councillor to the Prussian Crown" and sent "Phili" to the House of Lords as his special representative.

Besides the Prince, four other Eulenburgs were fattened by Imperial favor, largely on "Phili's" account: Count Botho, ex-Minister of State, Count Augustus, the Imperial Court Marshal, Major, Count Frederick Botho, and the Commander of the Body *Uhlands*.

Prince "Phili" is the father of two unmarried daughters, Countesses Alexandrine and Victoria. His eldest son, Frederick, married a rich Viennese girl. Two younger sons, Counts Siegwart and Charles, have not yet completed their studies.

Their sister Augusta ran away from home, some

years ago, with her father's then secretary, Edmund Jaroljmek, a Pole.

After the first Harden trial, Countess Augusta congratulated the editor on his victory over her father, while Jaroljmek, probably to balance accounts, declared emphatically, that the rumors stamping him a victim of his father-in-law's libertinage had no foundation in fact,—which is uplifting, to say the least.

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To establish, in cold type, the relationship between Kaiser Wilhelm and the person abandoned by his children, common decency forbids. That it continued for twenty years the *scandalum magnatum* of Europe's courts, despite the protests and anathemas of three Chancellors—Bismarck, Caprivi and Hohenlohe—suffices to characterize the friendship between the head of the German Empire and the seducer of sailor boys and recruits, who boasted that a "sweaty fisherman's blouse" smelled sweeter to him than the most dainty, perfumed petticoat.

Prince Bismarck used to say: "There have been some clever warriors among the Kinadists—Alcibiades, Cæsar, Peter the Great, and many Turkish Sultans, whose names I forgot—but never a diplomat of distinction."

And both Bismarck *père* and his son Herbert made it their business to tell the Emperor repeatedly that Eulenburg was unfit company for him, stating their reasons in the plainest language.

To cap the climax, the elder Bismarck added: "One glance of Eulenburg's lecherous eyes is enough to spoil the most elaborate luncheon for me."—Could *gourmet* express himself more emphatically?

But, the Kaiser took no notice and continued to wear the badge of "horrid effeminacy," to quote Pepys, the bracelet "sacred to friendship,"—but whether it

was placed on his arm by "Phili," "Tütü," "Willy," "Jeanie" or "Freddie," I was unable to ascertain.

That "Phili" is the abbreviation of Philip is easily seen, but what, in the world, can "Tütü" stand for?

I will tell you: His Excellency, Lieutenant-General Count Kuno von Moltke, Commander of the Imperial headquarters and the Capital City of Berlin, also Lord of the Cathedral, by William's favor.

General of Cavalry, William Count von Hohenlohe, is "Willy," Colonel-Convict Johannes, Count von Lynar, "Jeanie," and Colonel Count Frederick von Hohenau is "Freddie."

Mark you well, at the same time, that in the Fatherland, abbreviations of given names are very rarely applied to grown persons, and that, in particular, effeminisation of such is unheard of.

A person addressing a German as "Fritzi" (the German equivalent for Freddie) would be promptly knocked down.

It remained for the Kaiser's inner circle of friends to revive the vernacular of the French Henri's disreputable court, as well as its abominations.

Reflect that "Willy" Hohenau, as stated, was the Crown Prince's Governor and that "Tütü" Moltke, as Commander of Berlin, had planned to make "Jeanie" Lynar an Imperial Adjutant and a member of the Royal household, which, at that time, included a number of young Princes not yet corrupted.

But, presume William's well wishers: The Kaiser himself had no direct knowledge, of course, of the enormities committed by his intimates.

If this charitable surmise be true, then William's faculties of observation and for judging character and men must be sadly impaired, for Eulenburg's name appears on the police roll of dishonor, section "The Gentlemanly Perverse," as early as 1894.

Baron von Richthofen, one of the police presidents of Berlin, appointed by the Kaiser, put it there.

And the authorities of Oldenburg, Munich, Starnberg, Stuttgart and Vienna promptly followed suit. Wherever His Majesty's Councillor, Minister or Ambassador stopped for any length of time, in his official capacity, or otherwise, he was recognized as a moral leper and placed under police surveillance for the protection of minors.

That Baron Richthofen and his successors in the presidency of the Berlin police, who report daily to the Kaiser on criminal and personal affairs, made it a point not to annoy him with gossip reflecting on an intimate friend goes without saying, but that neither of these gentlemen was ever forced, by duty or circumstances, to allude to, or hint at, Eulenburg's Lupinar adventures is about as likely as that a camel jumps through the eye of a needle.

It is proved, on the other hand, that the highest police authority in Prussia, William's appointee, expressly forbade *Herren* von Treskow and Kopp, members of the Berlin detective force, to prosecute "Phili" Eulenburg along with the rest of the Kalokagathis.

This command was issued when Eulenburg had besotted himself with a number of Berlin "lowbrows" to the extent of taking their money—a male Theodora, only worse, for the Byzantine Empress, born and bred a courtesan, simply returned to her old trade. But, come to think of it, was harlotry a new one for "Phili"?

His Munich soldier-friends tell us that he "lent" them to his intimates, Count Johannes Lonyay, Count Lynar, Count Wedell, Baron von Wendelstadt and others. And there is no manner of doubt that he introduced to the Kaiser, Sailor Trost, of the Hohenzollern, and Count Schack of Munich, in whose picture gallery (since willed to the Kaiser) *le vice allemand* wriggled its wildest.

Why?

Not for the same reason, let us hope, that prompted

"Phili" to recommend Recruit Bollhardt to Captain of Horse, Count Lynar, and Riedel, of the Lancers, to Count "Tütü" Moltke, when the latter commanded the Magdeburg Cuirassiers.

Moltke, by the way, had the goodness to bring to His Majesty's notice another sailor of the Imperial yacht, Gustave Steinhauer, by name, and, like the rest of the *Mignons*, Gus enjoyed a meteoric career: Sailor, first mate, police sergeant, chief and guardian of the Imperial person whenever the Kaiser went to see his beloved "Phili."

"The rest of the *Mignons*," I said, allow me:—Court Councillor Kestler, at His Majesty's service. Rose from the ranks to gentlemanly estate and high honors. Makes as much noise as a Spanish procession mule, even when he only glides through a room,—the numerous Royal decorations on his devoted breast cause the silvery racket.

Kestler, by the way, had the misfortune to "pink" Prince Richard Dohna during the last hunt the gentlemen of the Round Table held at Liebenberg.

"Awfully sorry," of course,—ought to have killed him outright since Dohna was the only non-Kinadist in the jolly house party, which included, besides "Tütü" Moltke, Lynar and the two Hohenaus, Raymond Lecomte, French *Chargé d' Affaires* in Berlin, Count Edgar Wedell and Gunther Count von der Schulenburg, of Castle Oest, Rhineland.

The latter is the genius who figured out that every tenth German aristocrat is an Unspeakable and that, for the reasons stated, the Fatherland's noblemen ought to unite in a club for mutual amusement and protection—every tenth man of them.

I believe he cited St. Paul to justify the demand for this unholy union.

For Edgar Wedell, too, the hunt turned out badly.

Some time later His Majesty's Chamberlain was publicly accused—ere the Royal president of police

could prevent it—but, of course, the Excellency was given a chance to join the Hohenaus on foreign shores.

The awful Prussian Nemesis was not wholly blind, though. Count Wedell's residence in the Berlin Princess's palace, adjoining the Crown Prince's, and connected with it by a stone arch, he "forever" forfeited.

Terrible punishment for the dastard who turned a Royal residence into a brothel! His Excellency's "tea parties," you must know, were invariably held in the palace, and Count Kuno von Moltke, guardian of the capital's morals and honor, was a regular attendant there.

As a great man is best known to his valet, so the wife of a person of the Moltke stripe is most capable of passing judgment on him.

Hear what *Frau* von Elbe, sometime Countess Kuno von Moltke, says of the Emperor's friend, "Tütü": "Scarcely had we been married than the Count turned upon me and bade me not touch him, nor come near him, denouncing marriage as the vilest institution and woman as unworthy of consideration by man.

"I returned from our wedding trip a mental wreck, a frightened, brow-beaten girl, afraid to look my mother in the eye, or to face my friends."

It is impossible, outside of a courtroom, to even hint at the language in which Count Moltke defended his theories regarding women and marriage. That he was sent into the world by Providence to inflict pain and to chastise her "vile sex," was one of his pet phrases.

Frau von Elbe continued: "While abusing me and insulting my womanhood, Count Moltke referred in words of disquieting sweetness to his male friends, particularly Eulenburg. I did not understand, thought he was joking, at first, but my eyes were soon to be opened.

"One day my husband came home very much elated.

"After dinner I happened to have business in his study, and there I found him standing before a mirror kissing a handkerchief. It struck me as comical and I laughed outright, whereupon he turned on me savagely and cried:

"Can you not see, goose, that I have the honor and the pleasure of holding in my hand a souvenir from Prince "Phili"? He gave it to me this forenoon, and I have been in a transport of happiness ever since."

"Next day Prince Eulenburg called and asked to see me in private. When we were alone, he fell upon his knees and, raising his hands in supplication, begged me never to insist upon my conjugal rights, but to give him back the 'friend of his soul, his Tütü.'"

Amid such scenes of degradation *Frau von Elbe* spent eight long years, being reluctant to sue for divorce on religious grounds. When finally she decided on separation, she asked the Count: "What will His Majesty say to this?"

"Pshaw," replied the Commander of Berlin, "the Kaiser hears only as much of affairs as I want him to know,—no more."

Her marriage to von Moltke was *Frau von Elbe's* second venture, and fear for the purity of a little son she had by her first husband induced her as much as other considerations to seek divorce, despite religious scruples.

Frau von Elbe stated in the divorce court that the splendor of Count Moltke's military career had attracted her. "Career" and "splendor" must be taken with a grain of salt, of course. As a matter of fact, "Tütü" never rose above the level of a drawing-room soldier, and that he achieved exalted positions over the heads of officers of real worth was entirely due to the Kaiser's favor.

However, what military qualities Moltke lacks, he

makes up for in sweet affection for the "all-highest master."

This fawning courtier and fastidious Martinet, who, as a benedict of three days' standing, told his bride that a married woman was no better than a ———, wrote of the Emperor in such terms of endearment as "lovey" and "sweetheart," saying that he longed to hold him "in his warm embrace," and directly addressed him at various times as "my soul," "my all," etc.

If the walls of the Bank of England had eyes we might know how the Emperor replied to these outbursts of unholy passion, for there, as stated, are deposited the letters he wrote to the Unspeakables more careful about their correspondence than Princess Anne-Elizabeth's husband.

Personally, he never hesitated, before the Round Table scandals became public property, to display his affection for the *Mignons*. If Count Lynar could obtain a respite of a day only for each kiss William showered upon him, he would soon be a free man; and Counts "Freddie" and "Willy," if assured of commutation of the prison sentence awaiting them on the same terms, might return at once without fear of being compelled, for ever so short a time, to change their fashion of spoons.

Unashamed as the *Mignons* are, the osculatory exercises between the Kaiser and his bosom friends occurred frequently before large and distinguished audiences, at receptions, clubs, army and navy casinos and at the yacht races, with high officials, courtiers and their ladies looking on.

While the peculiar code of German manners might explain William's tenderness to the Hohenaus on the score of relationship, there seems no excuse for kissing Lynar, who is neither his cousin nor inviting to look upon.

The Hohenaus, as may be remembered, are the sons of William's uncle, the late Prince Albrecht of Prussia, Regent of Brunswick, but I leave it to the unbiased reader to judge whether such illegitimate cousinship warrants the suspicious warmth of such tirades as these:

"Willy" (or "Freddie") "my boy, we are of the same flesh and blood" (smacking him on the lips), "to my heart" (another buss), "dearest boy" (busses him four or five times in succession), "for I love thee as a brother."

This, while two men of fifty, or thereabouts, stand locked in ardent embrace, patting each other on the shoulder and giving every evidence of the utmost satisfaction.

Disgusting, you say? Rather label it evidence of Cæsarian degeneracy.

Whatever the Kaiser's peculiarities, he has plenty of royal company. To mention only a few off-hand among his nearest blood relatives: There is Prince Frederick Leopold.

Frederick Leopold began his career as a bully by joining the noble band of wife-beaters and by brow-beating everybody he came in contact with—everybody, save the Emperor.

In recent years, his sons, boys between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, had to be taken away from him for fear that he would slowly murder them to satisfy his Sadist tendencies.

Aside from the Hohenaus, two other sons of the late Prince Albrecht, offspring of his first marriage with Marianne of the Netherlands, are in disgrace. If not Princes of the blood they would undoubtedly keep Count Lynar company, and so would a brother or two of the Emperor of Austria, a Prince of Braganza—the fellow who got vulgarly "pinched" by a London "bobby" on the eve of King Edward's coronation—and the Sovereign of a certain tiny realm

who married a beautiful American girl, the lady whose friendship for Isidor de Lara, the composer, gave rise to the peculiar play of words: *Ici dort De Lara*. (No, I won't say on whose boudoir door the *calembour* was written).

Still there is no positive evidence that William knew more about the real character of his intimates than they considered opportune to exhibit before "the all-highest master."

And Major von Normann? Who says that the Kaiser ever heard of Normann's moral turpitude previous to his friend's suicide?

Of course, he knew of the accusations against the late cannon king, Friederich Krupp, when, standing at his open grave, he declared that he was weeping for "the grandest, the noblest of men."

"The grandest," etc., took poison at the moment when the police of Corfu decided to issue a warrant for his arrest. Charge: Seduction in the Grotto Azzura; the names of the victims—by the way—did not terminate in the letter "a."

Still, what is a "*Dago*" warrant to Imperial Omniscience? William chooses not to believe a word of the "vile slander," launched against his "dearest Friederich," nor did he listen when a sprightly Bavarian Princess hinted rather broadly at "Phili's" *tête-à-tête* with Riedel. The pair were in a boat on Starnberger Lake and Her Royal Highness ascertained her facts by the aid of a powerful spyglass. There is hardly anything a lady born in the purple will not stoop to if tickled by curiosity.

Chacun à son goût—the Kaiser chooses to be deaf and dumb and blind where his intimates' morals are concerned—but of being their accomplice he has never been convicted.

Suppose "dear Phili" is the reincarnation of the infamous *Chevalier* de Lorraine, organizer of the

"League Against Women"¹ under Louis XIV,—William, on his part, never allowed Templars' absurdities and worse to interfere with his dynastic duties.

As to "Tütü" and "Willy," strange rumors were circulated at Court. Far from heeding the gossips, the Kaiser made these gentlemen Grand Crosses of the Sublime Order of Hohenzollern.

In 1901, "Phili's" brother, Count Frederick Botho, Major of Guard Dragoons, suffered the same misfortune as Lynar afterward. The army expelled him as a mangy dog, but the State's Attorney received instructions not to prosecute.

Perhaps Frederick Botho—like brother "Phili"—had been careful to retain certain letters; perhaps the Kaiser remembered the many fine entertainments he enjoyed at Liebenberg with money furnished by Frederick Botho's wife; at any rate, William remains an enigma, morally as well as mentally.

But one thing is certain: If, like the Grand Dukes of Mecklenburg, the Kaiser possessed the "right of abolition," *i. e.*, to throw out of any court of judiciary in his realms any charge or case he pleases, "Phili," "Freddie," "Willy," "Tütü" and the other *Mignons* would still be at the head of affairs in the Fatherland.

In conclusion, let me say that recent events have at last solved the mystery of the anonymous letter scandal.

The "Philies," "Freddies," "Jeanies," "Tütüs" and "Willys," if you please, started it. Their object? To wean the Kaiser away from *Frau* von Kotze and Countess Fritz Hohenau.

On the count of morality?

No.

On the plea of abnormality.

¹ The motto of this society was: "Let the ladies follow our example and the world will come to an end."

CHAPTER XIX

We heard "The Day's" rumblings about the Palace long before the murder of the Arch-Duke was actually consummated. The death sentence had been passed when he brought his wife to Berlin and the latter had been found wanting in humility.

"The upstart gives herself airs like one born in the purple," said the Kaiserin.

"Let her—while she is alive," smiled William, one of his sardonic smiles. "I promise thee, Sophie shall never be Empress of Austria."

"But I understood that you supported those preposterous claims of the Bohemian baggage," insisted her Majesty.

"Politics, my dear! The last time I was in Rome, I promised the Pope the Eternal City and the restoration of the States of the Church. Will he get them?"

At that moment Count Moltke, chief of the General Staff, was announced.

The Kaiser drew him at once into a window embrasure, where the Crown Prince happened to be whiling away the hours of enforced attendance at court with little Bassewitz, the same who, by and by, became his sister-in-law, on the left hand.

"Francis Ferdinand is impossible—a stubborn, bigoted, priest-ridden ass. I can't work with him," said Wilhelm to Moltke.

"I told you so, father," chimed in young William, "but you insisted upon making a holy show of him. Having proclaimed him your 'sweet brother-in-arms,' the 'friend of your soul'—now you purpose to get rid of the pest. But how?"

"Leave that to me," answered the Kaiser curtly and turned to whisper to Moltke.

But the Crown Prince was not to be squelched. He interrupted the Emperor a second time. "Send for Heeringen" (meaning the General of that name) he advised. "Our Moltke is far too ladylike for that sort of business." And he drew his hand, like the blade of a knife, across his throat, while guffawing noisily at his "joke."

General Moltke attempted to say something, but the Kaiser cut him short. "Perhaps Willie is right. Heeringen shall be sent for."

And the Chief of the mightiest war machine the world had ever seen up to that time was dismissed like a footman.

As Moltke withdrew, the Kaiser called after him: "The Empress is looking for Bassewitz. Take her along."

"There, she kept this corner warm for you," said William, Jr., drawing the Kaiser onto the seat next to him. A little later, the pair was joined by Heeringen, the same who achieved looter's laurels during the war. And when the three men rejoined the ladies, no conscientious insurance agent would have taken a one hundred-dollar risk on Francis Ferdinand's life—provided he had been able to read their thoughts.

A few days afterward, Crown Princess Cecilia tried to curry favor with her father-in-law by making her oldest boy memorize the statistics relating to the Kaiser's record as a hunter. The smallest little Willie began very well and mamma was very proud, showing him off before the assembled court.

"Grandpa has killed so and so many hares, and so and so many roes, etc., etc.," began the child, saying his lesson with evident fear and trepidation.

Of course everybody sat up and smiled benignly at the singing of the Kaiser's praises and at Cecilia's and the boy's triumph, the maiden effort of a king-to-be, we fondly imagined. But for once William had no use for incense burned on the altar of his vanity.

Without looking at the Crown Princess, he reprimanded the little one's governor in this summary fashion:

"That will do exceedingly well for the nursery; splendid thing to develop memory. But just at present I am dealing with more interesting and even more important figures.

"I find that my sublime ancestor, Frederick the Great"—and the Kaiser bowed three times—"gained his famous victories, on the average, at a cost of eleven per cent. of his effectives.

"But that was way back in the eighteenth century. If I decide to sound the bugle-call now-a-days—"

The Kaiser paused to view his audience, and, to be sure, all depending on his good pleasure tried to meet his searching eye with expressions of enthusiasm. For to be at all lukewarm on such occasions, meant disgrace. Hence most of the officers began playing with their sword hilts.

"When I command my armies to move against the miscreants that oppose my will," continued William, raising his voice, "I am afraid the percentage of loss of life will be vastly higher. Salm!"

He turned abruptly to General of Horse Prince Salm-Horstmar, one of our chief fire-eaters.

"Salm, the statistics we have worked out," demanded William.

The adjutant general handed him a typewritten statement, bearing the Kaiser's ceremonial signature. William seemed to take special pride reading it aloud.

I append a copy of the document, as subsequently issued, by the general staff.

"From this it would seem that one-third of my armies must die for Kaiser and Fatherland," lectured William, pointing to items in the last column of the statement. "Hence, if I send nine million men to the front, six millions only may be expected to return home."

VICTIMS OF THE GREAT BATTLES, 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY

Battles.	Year.	Forces Engaged.	Losses.
Leipzig	1813	500,000	140,000
Muckden	1905	624,000	138,000
Sedan	1870	320,000	*122,000
Borodine	1812	246,000	80,000
Waterloo	1815	192,000	65,000
Wagram	1809	290,000	63,000
Shaho	1905	355,000	63,000
Koeniggratz ...	1866	435,000	54,000
Dresden	1813	300,000	50,000
Plevna	1877	163,000	50,000
Eylau	1807	158,000	49,000
Aspern	1809	148,000	48,000

* Including prisoners.

The master death-dealer once more surveyed us, who were standing and sitting around him. Though all the men present were soldiers and all the women and girls had either father, husband or brothers and cousins in the army, there was no perceptible diminishing of enthusiasm.

He piled on the agony a little more.

"This one-third," he went on, "our losses of say, one million out of every three, leaves the latest triumphs of my Essen and Wilhelmshaven establishments out of the reckoning though. I expect to have plenty of Krupp guns turned against me. My death factory, as you know, sells to all the world."

A cruel smile played about the Kaiser's hard mouth as he trumpeted forth the sentence, which meant mention in the Roll of Honor for millions of men. And, as if to emphasize his determination of mass-killing, he pushed out his slanting chin.

"But what matters it?" he demanded in a tone of triumph, "since, according to other statistics I gathered, the vanquished always pay the bigger price, from twenty-five to thirty per cent. more? So if we lose,

which the Good German God forbid—one million men, one million three hundred and fifty thousand of the French must bite the dust! With their steadily decreasing birthrate, how long do you suppose can they stand that racket?"

The above were only a few of many similar indications that "The Day" was scheduled to loom big in the near future, while the Kaiser's restlessness and mental excitement increased proportionately—a thing no one had ever thought remotely possible.

In particular he was forever in conference with someone, General of the Army Moltke, or some under-chief of the General Staff, the Minister of War, or the Chancellor. And not infrequently a "confounded Socialist" was led up back stairs to be interviewed by one of William's confidants—with William eavesdropping behind the arras. But as to "Reds," generally, the Kaiser damned them as lustily as ever in our, i.e. his circles. Just the same, he let Bethmann-Hollweg dicker with them for votes and for their influence with the "working rabble."

And there were numerous confabs with representatives of the liberal, clerical and radical parties. All and everybody was being appeased or threatened, cajoled or made a doormat of to help launch "The Day."

The Kaiser shouted: "I command Krupp," (indicating the wish to talk with the head of the Factory of Death) so often and so persistently that one of his several phone operators connected with Essen the moment the Kaiser opened his mouth.

During the first two or three years of the war I read in the London and Paris press dozens of articles, big and small, dealing with a certain Berlin or Potsdam Crown Council, whether or not such a one had been held at such and such a time. I am even told that there are pamphlets and whole books pro and con.

One might as well argue for or against yesterday's

sunrise. Crown Councils indeed!—what was a Crown Council more or less in those pre-war days?

Its constituent members, the royal princes, the ministers of state, the field marshals, the chiefs of the Kaiser's military and naval households, the commanding generals, etc., were either in constant attendance on William, or within easy call, while the rest, ex-ministers of state and other high officials on half pay, hovered near, hoping for possible re-establishment if, perchance, they stroked William just right. And "old Henckel"—one of the chief councilors—you couldn't drive away!

What, then, prevented William the Sudden, from calling a Crown Council at any hour, day or night?

I heard of Crown Councils held in trains, on lonely Peacock's Island, at Rominten and various other out-of-the-way hunting boxes, royal and otherwise,—any old place would do when the Kaiser wanted to cloak the imposition of his will upon the people by the semblance of constitutional endorsement.

As the Spanish King, sacked by the great Napoleon, at all times had a monk handy to grant him absolution when guilty of sin, so the Kaiser turned the Crown Council to good account while the world war was hatching. For the first time he wanted backing—: presto, the Crown Council out-dictatored the dictator!

The Imperial Charger had been led to the water:—"give him drink," commanded William the Crown Council.

As everybody knows, William began his career by trying to push his father from the throne before and during those miserable and painful 100 days, the agony of which appalled even the Hohenzollerns' most outspoken enemies. And he had been pushing and crowding persons and affairs ever since.

Still, at the brink of the precipice, there were moments when the blind staggers of possible disaster laid a heavy hand upon his shoulder.

The Berlin court was amazed and moved to irreverent laughter by the exalted opinions which a solitary American writer expressed about the Crown Prince's talents, his diligence and sound judgment. As we know, and of course ought to know best, William, Jr., is quite an ordinary, rather "horsey gent," who, shorn of rank and environment, might have made a passable lightning rod agent if he fell down on the job of salesman in a shoe store. But he was pre-eminent in this:

If William, Sr., needed "bucking" up, William, Jr., was the one to do the bucking.

As an American-born countess, belonging to the Munich court set, put it: "My, he does 'sass' his old man!"

And if, perchance, the Kaiser showed backbone—a commodity not much in evidence in his family circle of late years—the Crown Prince had a host of auxiliaries to help him.

As already remarked in passing there was "old Henckel." (Count Guy Henckel) very anxious to augment his enormous wealth by fair means or foul. In the summer of 1914, he achieved the ripe old age of eighty-four, and as he quaintly said, "had no time left for moral or judicial niceties."

If he was to get those Belgian or French coal fields and iron mines which the Kaiser had promised him for his lifelong support, financial and otherwise, why, "The Day" must not be "cake tomorrow."

Count Zeppelin, since dead, played on the same string. He was getting on in years, and before he "kicked the bucket," he wanted to "lay London and Paris and possibly New York in ashes" by his latest machine—always his latest.

And there was Gwinner and Rathenau and a hundred and one other industrial and financial barons with or without handles to their names.

Cecilia's fortune and William, Jr.'s savings (what

there was of such), were bound up with those of the Fatherland's merchant princes.

If war meant larger dividends, as the Frankfort nabobs predicted, why, the Kaiser must be prodded to say "go" now, particularly, as Little Willie was building a new home for himself at Potsdam—one of those enormous hideous German palaces, which Thackeray was wont to shed tears over.

The spoils of war, I heard the Crown Prince say more than once, might be used to construct the marble-lined swimming pool, as large as a Swiss lake, which he was crazy about, they might build miles of greenhouses and buy tons of articles de vertu; as well as unrivalled Napoleon souvenirs—"hence we must have war."

And of course, there was the Princes' Trust: Pless, Hohenlohe and Max Furstenberg, all of them longing for muddled water to catch gold fish. Their giant financial Utopias bewildered and charmed the Kaiser; control of the Bank of England, of the New York Stock Exchange and of gambling houses the world over. Lovely, eh?

After the Austrian Archduke incident, the Kaiser's activities as war promotor grew more direct, more systematic and more wide-spread. His daily cable tolls to America, alone would have kept a good-sized family going for a month.

"Bernstorff must know what I think of that affair," he kept saying at luncheon, dinner and supper. Or more often:

"Now to fool those idiotic Yanks. John tells me they love to swallow the bait I hand them."

And on such occasions, Rieger couldn't fetch the pad of telegraph blanks quickly enough.

When Francis Ferdinand had been a doomed man for a week or ten days (of course he didn't know it, poor chap), the Crown Prince one evening interrupted a poker game in his bachelor quarters at the Marble

Palace. "Get me Huelsen, on the double quick," he said to his adjutant, throwing down his cards.

"Huelsen," he ordered in his most imperious style after the connection had been effected, "I want you to be put on 'Diplomacy' on Wednesday at the very latest."

There was considerable buzzing, Huelsen replying no doubt, but Willie hung up the receiver. The director of the royal playhouse had his orders and the Crown Prince wasn't interested in what the director might have to say on the subject.

Not to miss one of their five constitutional meals a day—five, count 'em!—the imperial family had tea and sandwiches served to them between acts at the theater. During the first act of "Diplomacy," William, Jr., had talked to the Kaiser off and on, commenting particularly on the woman spy, and during the repast he continued his "illuminating talk," as he termed his vaporings.

The Kaiser seemed to pay more attention to Willie than usual, affecting the thoughtful mien which characterizes most of his portraits. Suddenly he put down his cup and beckoned to me.

"Baroness," he whispered, as, standing behind his chair, I bent over him, "make haste and call up Daisy. Tell her to start for Berlin instantly. No, the midnight train will do," (it was then 9 o'clock). "I have got a mission for her: special ambassadress. Make her mouth water, you know."

"But," I boldly suggested, "wouldn't the princess be more eager still if his Majesty in person did the talking?"

"Of course she would, any pretty woman would,"—I was being backed by William, Jr., who probably had a favor to ask of papa. "Call her yourself, father," he added.

"And have the whole castle know what's what?" demanded the Kaiser. "Mind your own business,

Willie, and you Baroness—" He was going to say something rude, but at that moment the operator signalled that the line to Pless was clear. I hurriedly left the table to go to the booth. (All wires and lines, favored by the Kaiser, had to be abandoned by operators and officials the moment William indicated that he desired to speak himself or by deputy.)

I was explaining his Majesty's orders to the Princess Pless for the second time, when William, Jr., burst in. "Tell her, never mind court dress—travelling outfit, tailormade and half a dozen semi-evening gowns will do."

"But what does it all mean?" asked Daisy, when I had transcribed the order to her.

"A hurried trip to her old country," whispered William, Jr., into my ear. "But secrecy, dead secrecy, Kaiser's most stringent orders. We will have her ears, tell her, if she breathes a word even to her lap dog."

Daisy, Princess Pless, born Mary Theresa Olivia Cornwallis West, of Ruthin Castle, England, was then forty-one years old and no longer the great beauty over whom the illustrated papers raved when she was a girl at home. And though her husband's royal estate at Pless is one of the finest on the continent and though the castle is set in romantic and even poetic environment, more than twenty years of German life had coarsened her in looks as well as in manner. German royalty, after which she patterned, is rough-shod, over-feeding and over-weening. Titled attendants, like myself, are treated with sarcasm at court; the ordinary run of servants is used worse than beasts of burden.

"Why shout at the man," asked the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward, when on a visit to Berlin, he heard his imperial nephew bawl at a lackey; "he isn't deaf, is he?"

"You don't understand, uncle! It's customary here to rave at servants, so they know who is the master."

In May, 1914, we find Wilhelm's special ambassadress

in London town. He had asked Princess Pless to try to persuade Lord Kitchener and Lord Roberts to come to Germany for a stay at her house, and she did his bidding, right or wrong, giving no thought to possible consequences, I dare say.

People have exaggerated the Kaiser's reputation for gallantry. In the early years of his reign, when at last free to lay his hands on millions, he indulged in a succession of mistresses, it is true, but the anonymous letter scandal and his growing intimacy with the Eulenburg coterie cured him of that weakness. For the last ten years and more women have merely served him as so many "Countesses Castigliones." Their ladyships were made to believe that the king's crust was better than their lord's dainties and were flattered into the conviction that special privileges had been conferred upon them and that under all-highest guidance diplomacy was to be their oyster.

The acts of "diplomacy" assigned to them were spying at home or abroad, and the dirtier the work for the Kaiser's greater glory, the nobler it was in the eyes of true patriots! And the lady spy's reward? If successful: Royal decorations for herself, titles, advancement for husband, cousins, uncles or sons! If found out: Banishment from court and society.

Wilhelm's idea, superinduced by the play of Diplomacy, was to make Kitchener and Roberts, England's leading military men, prisoners of war in the midst of peace. . . . He intended to lure them on a hunting trip into the very heart of the Central Empires, midway between Berlin and Vienna; there to sequester them in the lonely castle of Pless, without reach of post, telegraph or phone.

"Impossible," you say, "there are no such wild and woolly places in Germany." Yes, there are: Kaiser-made, for when Wilhelm stays at a country house, the entire postal and telegraph services are suspended for all other inmates, and nothing short of the all-highest

"I command," makes the post come forward and sets the phone and wires working. There can be no manner of doubt that if Lord Kitchener had accepted the Kaiser's invitation to meet him at Pless in the last weeks of July, 1914, Wilhelm would have managed to isolate him from London and the British Embassy in Berlin, for the time he wanted him isolated, as thoroughly as if the future British Minister of War had been on a visit to Mars—him and Lord Roberts, who was also invited "as a surprise" for Lord Kitchener.

Expecting many callers on the Kaiser's business, Daisy, after a short stay at the Savoy, leased a furnished flat in Jermyn street, Piccadilly, a unique establishment, for none of the servants spoke a word of English. Perhaps the circumstance that the same apartment has frequently housed William, Jr., when in London incognito, accounts for that.

Such were the London safeguards. But what about the proposed victims?

The Kaiser intended to decree a "real rest" for his friends: "absolutely nothing to worry them!" The chase, agreeable company, lordly splendor and his (Wilhelm's) boon companionship would make their days and evenings a delight. And there would be new war inventions, shown by special favor, to interest them: Krupp would send cannon and Wilhelmshaven models of submarines. There would be professors to talk economics, old saber-tasches, great nobles, industrial barons and pretty women.

At the same time, unknown to his British guests, the Kaiser would continue his mischief-making activities through a thousand and one channels; royal scamps like Tino, over-rated popinjays like Buelow, pleaders for organized dishonesty like Bethmann-Hollweg, and through diplomatic devilry of the John Bernstorff sort; through his paid and voluntary press agents in all parts of the world besides. And he would be at it until the time was ripe for his war provoking ultimata to

Belgrade, Petrograd and Paris. Then, after creating "a military necessity that knows no law," his English guests would become his prisoners, "prisoners of war," and Wilhelm could snap his fingers at Downing Street. For England's "contemptible little army" would then be headless, its organizing and fighting spirits would be in his, the Kaiser's hands.

Such was the plot.

But Lord Kitchener was not the man to submit to treatment of that sort. While as to telegrams sent by him, or addressed to him, he might be deceived for a little while, yet eventually he would become suspicious about the delay of his mail and would insist upon phoning to his Berlin Embassy. Besides, he would object to being cooped up in the castle and would venture out of his own account.

Undoubtedly he would, but what chance would he have had, surrounded and spied upon by Germans? For the Kaiser would see to it that no English speaking servant was at the castle or in the neighborhood, and the hosts, other guests and the entourage, while pretending to be most eager to accede to the English lords' slightest wishes, would do nothing to assist them. Far from it, they would help to thwart Kitchener's and Lord Roberts' every effort to get an inkling of the true situation.

And if the English with accustomed energy, nevertheless ventured to break through the charmed circle, why there was the last and not unconventional resort of "pinking" them! Accidents happen at the best regulated "shoots" while an Imperial chase brought into action, besides the numerous guests, scores of professional huntsmen and foresters, gendarmes, detectives and soldiers. Nothing easier then, but to arrange for a stray shot at persons so conspicuous as Kitchener or Roberts. The very multitude of possible delinquents would forestall discovery, for there are always poachers among the small army of beaters. Hence

obvious explanations and excuses! And, if it seemed undesirable to employ a hired assassin or uniformed underling, why, some courtier or army officer would "oblige." For a silver star or cross set with seed pearl, this sort of gentry would do worse than wound a man to order.

Of course the shot must not kill—that would cause too much uproar. It was intended only to wound the victim so as to lay him up for some time.

The Kaiser's ambassadress had no sooner taken possession of her flat, than she rang up a certain Haymarket stenographer's office, and ordered a "typist-woman for four o'clock sharp, not a minute later."

We will let the "typist-woman" tell her own story.

"I was there at the stroke of the clock. A German footman stood facing the elevator, and beckoned me to follow him. He pointed to a chair near the window in what looked like a boudoir-library, and there I sat fully twenty-eight minutes before the elevator gave another sign of life. Then there was a commotion and I heard a high pitched voice call out something which sounded like: 'Has the typist-woman come?'

"When her German Highness was at last comfortable in a high-backed chair, a cushion under her, another at her back and two more at her elbows and a small eiderdown laprobe over her knees and slippers feet, she turned upon my unworthy self, and queried in English. 'The typist-woman?'

"'As you see,' I replied.

"'Well, I have some important letters and very little time before dinner.'

"'My dear Lord Roberts,' the princess began her dictation. She leaned back and thought long and earnestly. There were several beginnings, crossed out as soon as put on paper. But when the opening lines were once settled, her Highness proceeded quickly, and when I read the finished letter over to her she was quite satisfied. I wondered much at so much weighing of

words and phrases. Surely a grande dame ought to have had no difficulty in penning a simple invitation to the chase, for that was the long and short of our labors. She wanted Lord Roberts to be a guest at her Castle Pless, and asked him to fix a date for his early visit. She would be pleased to have him in the next few weeks. There would be good shooting for his Lordship, and she took it upon herself to promise that 'Majesty' would be of the party. 'What a happy coincidence,' she fluttered, 'quite informal of course, such a meeting of the youngest and oldest War-Lord!' To her personal knowledge there was no more sincere admirer of Roberts than the 'all-highest.' How they would revel in recollections of the 'Afghanistan and Indian campaigns, etc.,' and more of that sort.

"The princess stopped suddenly to ask: 'How much will that make?'

"'About a page in type.'

"'Gracious me, Lord Roberts will not read a type-written letter, I am sure. It must come sort of spontaneously from me. Let me see what kind of a hand you write.'

"I passed over a scribbled specimen, but her Highness said it wouldn't do at all, as it did not resemble her own writing in the least.

"'Maybe there is a girl at our office who can imitate your writing.' I ventured. The princess called to her maid, who fetched pencil and writing pad and a newspaper from which to copy. As hers is the average English high school girl's hand I said there would be no difficulty finding someone to write the letters in the same style.

"'Very well, then. Let's go on with our work,' said the Highness, and dictated a letter to Lord Kitchener similar to the one addressed to Lord Roberts.

"The Kitchener letter was even more pressing, more full of assurances of how much the all-highest would appreciate the chance-meeting and opportunity for

exchanging views and dissipating prejudices. All her own doings of course,—‘Majesty’ knew nothing at all about it. But William was so good and dear a friend of hers, he would come whenever she wanted him, and the presence of Lord Kitchener at the house was the greatest attraction that could possibly happen.

“As in the case of Lord Roberts, there was passing allusion to the disappointment felt at Potsdam that his Lordship had found it inconvenient to accept the all-highest invitation a month previous, but Majesty was not offended, certainly not, only the more eager to meet the hero of Khartum.

“The maid fetched an assortment of fancy letter-heads, with initials surmounted by a crown, and her Highness selected some that had a touch of intimacy about them: a pet name set in a scroll.

“‘These will do for their Lordships,’ she said. ‘And mind I must have the letters at seven to catch the early country mail.’”

The “typist-woman” continued: “When I returned in the evening, I was conducted right up to her Highness in the library. It was quite a small room. When her Highness beckoned to a gentleman sitting in the window niche to come and look at the letters, the place seemed quite full.

“The man’s face, suddenly popping up under the electric hanging globe, gave me a start.

“Surely, I had seen the face before, but I could not place it for the moment, though the title of Baron, twice repeated, sounded familiar enough. His Lordship was in elaborate evening dress—too elaborate for an Englishman and, moreover, both he and the Princess spoke in German. Therefore I did not understand what they were saying, except that they referred to the letters. Also there was a large amount of ‘Kaisers’ mixed in their lingo. The Baron nodded approvingly while he read the letter to Lord Roberts. Then he addressed me directly in English: ‘Of course, you can

get a typewritten copy from your notes, can't you?' Noticing that the Princess nodded assent, I did likewise. 'Send it to 9 Carlton House Terrace, marking a "K" in the corner of the envelope,' said the stranger, handing me half a crown.

"Unconsciously, no doubt, he continued to speak English when he turned to the Princess, saying: 'I'll send the copy to Majesty—a little masterpiece this. I always maintained when a smart woman, like your Highness, turns to diplomacy, she beats us poor professionals hollow.'

"Now I recognized him: Baron Kuhlmann of the German Embassy, the most consummate liar of the diplomatic corps. A newspaper girl friend had once pointed him out to me: 'Always good copy—if the editor could only believe a word he said,' had been Winnie's laughing comment.

"Daisy next handed the Baron the letter addressed to Lord Kitchener. He looked bewildered and, as he read on, his face fell. 'But, your Highness,' he remonstrated, 'to post both letters at the same time would never do.' Followed a string of German.

"The princess replied: 'But, I am sure, I followed the all-highest instructions.'

"'No doubt,' bowed his Lordship, 'but as it happened, the Kaiser didn't reckon with the possibility that both gentlemen might suggest different dates for their coming, and what then? We want them both together at the castle.'

"Her Highness looked annoyed. 'What are we to do?' she queried.

"'Post the letter to Lord Roberts tonight, and if he accepts for a certain date, we'll suggest that date in the letter to Lord Kitchener, which should be held until Lord Roberts' answer arrives.'

"'Very well, at your risk, Baron,' nodded her Highness and dismissed me. Three or four days later the telephone called me to the Princess's flat once more. I

was desired to have the letter to Lord Kitchener rewritten under the current date."

But Lord Kitchener and Roberts were either too wily, or thought too little of the Kaiser to swallow the bait, for both sent their regrets.

The Kaiser had just remarked: "If I catch Kitchener, I had better take Roberts, too. The pair of them my prisoners, means clapping the kibosh on British military organization and action," when Baron Kuhlmann's cipher dispatch, announcing the failure of Daisy's embassy, came rattling over the wire.

What he said after learning of the failure of his scheme is unfit for publication, and the punishment that fitted the crime was at once visited upon the "clumsy" envoy.

The official press got leave to roundly abuse "Daisy" for the impertinence of being an Englishwoman by birth, and later, when her Highness's mother, Mrs. Cornwallis West, courted trouble in London by falling in love with a soldier boy, young enough to be her grandson, that yarn, too, was given the widest possible publicity. You cannot fail to perceive: there was nothing too small, or perhaps small enough, for the Kaiser, and, above all things, he tried to live up to his conception of a gentleman.

I speak here only of things bearing on life at the palace and on the Kaiser's personal doings and concerns—in the spring and early summer of 1914 war-like forebodings multiplied at court. There was always talk of battles by land and sea, in the air and under the ocean.

"Nicky" (Russia), "Victor" (Italy), "Tino" (Greece), "George" (England), were names flying about the table and drawing rooms, not unfrequently coupled with ugly epithets. And Wilhelm flashed the red lantern of his bloodthirsty imagination on the most innocent subjects.

"My pistols at the heart of England (if need be)"

Heligoland and Antwerp—German Antwerp,” he used to declaim, at the same time assuring himself, his generals and the court that England wouldn’t dare oppose his will. “If George is a fool, why of course he must stand the consequences.”

“Really, coming to think of it, I would like Windsor Castle for a summer resort,” he declared on one such occasion.

“And you will let me have the Isle of Man, won’t you?” said Prince Eitel-Fritz, lounging near.

“Sure my boy, make a note of it,” Wilhelm nodded imperiously to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

One evening in May when the court was “graciously commanded” to see “Tannhauser” for the one hundred and fifteenth time, or thereabouts, the Kaiser spent most of the time reading a pamphlet, having withdrawn to the rear of his box. Toward the end of the first act, chamberlains went the rounds of all courtiers and friends of their Majesties at the opera house, whispering “The Kaiser wants to see you at tea. Go at once to the salon.”

As a consequence a goodly company assembled. They found the Kaiser very much excited, sort of transfused with the religious exaltation he usually affected on Sunday mornings.

“A curious thing happened this evening,” he told the company. “Among the new books arrived I found this (showing a slender volume bound in yellow), and though it was at the bottom of the bunch it caught my eye right away, magnet like.

“And this I found on page one hundred, exactly one hundred—mark that ladies and gentlemen.”

And turning to page one hundred, he read in a loud and excited voice:

“‘The Emperor is about to enter upon the happiest period of his life, so rich in unprecedented success. For the greatness and glory of the common Fatherland, he will make greater efforts and more gigantic sacri-

fices than ever. And his efforts, as is fit, will be crowned with success such as no one ever dared hope for. Germany, through the Kaiser's efforts, will arise from the impending crisis new born, revitalized, stronger and mightier. Indeed in the end the Kaiser might choose to wear a triple crown if he did not prefer the German diadem.

“And as to general prosperity and well-being, German commerce and industry will rule the world,—all the world's commerce and industry will be ours.”

The audience was quite dumbfounded at the surprise sprung. “I don't know how true this prophet says,” added William, “but you may remember a certain sentence from Maeterlinck: ‘We recognize the past,—another brain curvature and we may see the future, for what will happen tomorrow, is there today.’”

And striking an even more dramatic pose, the Kaiser almost shouted: “There have always been favored ones blessed with that future-curvature of Maeterlinck's, that is, the gift of prophecy.

“And now I say good-bye to you all,” concluded William—“within half an hour I will be on the way to Kiel to take a much needed rest on my yacht. And while communing with the sun or stars above, on the bridge of the Hohenzollern, I will be thinking of this,” shaking the book he held in his hand. “In the meanwhile you must buy this book, read this prophecy, ponder on it and spread it among the people, that the people may be prepared for the great deeds their Kaiser is on the eve of performing for the greatness of the Fatherland and the spread of German Kultur.”

Outwardly everything continued as before. The same ceremonials, the same superficial pomp garnishing real penury, the same private and festive gatherings, only all and everything and everybody was dressed up in filthy field gray, the ugliest, dirtiest color invented.

As to William himself, he no longer said: “Some more sugar, or coffee,” he sang it; he no longer said his

prayers (in public), he ranted them, and he no longer addressed a general, or lackey, without striking an attitude or haranguing that unhappy person.

On August 22, 1914, at luncheon, a dispatch was received announcing that chief Huntsman Baron Heintze was too ill to attend to duty.

"I should worry," growled the Kaiser, as he ordered Rieger to take the wire to the grand marshal. Then raising his voice in order to impose silence upon the company, he spoke as if addressing an open-air crowd:

"My commanding generals now play huntsmen for me. Listen to these figures: 250 civilians killed at Andenne, fifty at Seilles, likewise 150 houses burned at these places. The Belgians are learning what good huntsmen my troops are, eh?"

And the same evening General Von Buelow's "Order to the inhabitants of Liège," dated August 22, 1914, was posted on the newly installed blackboard in the Kaiser's anteroom. I have copied it, translating the French text:

ORDER

To the People of Liège

The population of Andenne, after making a display of peaceful intentions toward our troops, attacked them in the most treacherous manner. With my authorization, the general commanding these troops has reduced the town to ashes and has had 110 persons shot.

I bring this fact to the knowledge of the people of Liège in order that they may know what fate to expect should they adopt a similar attitude.

GENERAL VON BUELOW.
Liège, 22nd August, 1914.

The Kaiser read the order aloud to members of the court and several dinner guests to show off his French, when General Moltke said: "But how does that chime

in with Buelow's wire two days earlier, saying that he burned fifty-five houses at Liège, and shot, bayoneted and burned twenty-nine civilians?"

William gave Moltke an ugly look. "Buelow is obeying my orders," he said coldly.

From that day on the blackboard was kept "gay" by similar orders or proclamations, printed on all sorts of paper: pink, red, green, mauve, orange, blue; reporting pillage, incendiarism, rape, wholesale shootings, razings of villages and towns in Belgium, Northern France, Serbia and later in Italy, Russia, Roumania and Montenegro.

When on a visit to the palace, I once caught Wilhelm gloating over these figures, descriptive of the massacre of women and children, old men and youths. "Beats his Majesty's record in the hunting field," he said with a horrible air of satisfaction.

On the same day one of the secretaries showed me what Wilhelm wrote to the late Emperor Francis Joseph: "I must continue to cut the throats of old men, women and children in the occupied districts, or the war will last longer than financially convenient. By striking terror into the hearts of the French, and indirectly of the English, we will cause them to sue for peace the sooner, I reckon,"—his own words. I saw them in the copying book.

Yet by that time William had had *eye-sight knowledge of the enormities that his troops had practiced and were practicing in Belgium, France and Russia*, for since the war began he visited the battlefields as he had formerly gone to the chase. Whether hares or human beings were slain, was all the same to him, so long as there were heaps of them.

Wilhelm had traitors in all the courts except that of St. James'. That he never succeeded in seducing even one "confounded Englishman or Englishwoman" to betray his or her country, was a genuine grievance with him. "I have so many friends there and Willie

has, I can't understand why I get no response to my messages and financial offers," he wailed time and again.

He had better luck in Rome, both at the Quirinal and at the Vatican.

At the Papal Court was Gerlach, master of the robes to the Holy Father—"a bully fellow," as Teddy would say. When it comes to dynamite plotting, he can give points to Von Papen and Bernstorff."

In the fall of 1915, the Kaiser actually ordered his Herald office to make Gerlach a knight of the Black Eagle. The Herald office consulted with the Chancellor.

"Must we carry out that crazy order?"

"Of course, but I will not have it gazetted."

"And why is Gerlach so favored?"

"He managed the financial end of the blowing up of an Italian battleship—I forgot the name."

And Wilhelm forgot about the Black Eagle for Gerlach until that worthy was concerned in another battleship blowing up, in August, a year later.

The master of the robes was subsequently condemned to death in Rome, but fled to Switzerland, I am told.

When Italy declared war, the Kaiser wasn't at all worried about "the Dago army and navy," as he designated King Victor's forces. "I wonder whether they will have spunk enough to do it," he kept saying while scanning dispatches, hot from the wire.

"Spunk enough for *what*?" asked Eitel Fritz.

"Well, *you* ought to know," replied the Emperor. "You *walked* through it, the last time you were in Rome."

"Oh, you mean the tunnel from our Embassy under Capitol Hill to the great monument?"

"Exactly."

"Well, I clean forgot what it was for," said Eitel.

"I undertook that great work in order to blow up the Victor Emmanuel groups whenever it suited my purpose," replied the Kaiser, "and it suits my purpose

now, at this moment. Why in h—— don't they do it," he cried stamping his foot. "Don't those duffers know now is the time for making an impression!"

And he dictated a string of abusive cables to our diplomatic agents in Rome, who had just received their passports. Of course, these wires were politely thrown into the waste-basket when Wilhelm turned his back.

In fine, the responsibility for the war undividedly belongs to the Kaiser. His hand was on the throttle; though persons and circumstances were pushing the lever nearer and nearer, until it almost touched his hand, he and none else was in control of the fulcrum that chained or loosened the Power.

The Princes' Trust might whimper and cajole; the Crown Prince might rave; the General Staff supplicate, the Chancellor resign, politicians and industrial barons might squirm and argue, if Wilhelm, Emperor-Rex, hadn't said the word, the dogs of war would never have slipped the leash!

The royal Hohenzollerns are the biggest land owners in Prussia; they own palaces and apartment houses all over the world, in New York as well as in London, in Canada, in France, in Alaska, on the Mediterranean, in India and South America. And this same Hohenzollern family, made it a point to confiscate the private fortunes of the kings they deposed.

Hereunder I'll give a list of Hohenzollern possessions on the German soil. The authorities in foreign countries can easily find out the ex-Kaiser's holdings and investments under their jurisdiction.

In 1914, the Kaiser's income from all sources was twenty-two million marks per year, and was tax-free.

His cash deposits at various banks amounted to \$5,000,000.

The Kaiser owns absolutely three palaces in Berlin and thirteen in Potsdam and neighborhood. In other parts of Germany he owns twenty-four more palaces

and country houses, but the several palaces at Cassel, at Hamburg, Wiesbaden, Hanover, Celle, Osnabruck, and Glucksburg are not his, but property of the state.

It is not quite clear whether the royal castle in Berlin belongs to the Kaiser absolutely, but the contents do, and their value is estimated at \$4,000,000.

The Kaiser owns in Germany 74,420 acres of forest property and 47,439 acres of tillable land, the greater part of which are in the hands of tenants. Out of his landed property in Germany, the Kaiser used to draw a little less than \$1,000,000 per annum.

The value of the Kaiser's landed property in Germany is over \$17,000,000 unburdened by mortgages.

The entire family fortunes of the Hohenzollerns, compromising the entailed estates, are estimated at 175,000,000 marks, \$43,750,000.

The Crown Prince is also a big land owner. His Dukedom of Oels alone is worth at least \$4,000,000.

CHAPTER XX

His own people call him the *Mummel Greis*—the old-man-a-mumbling.

As a matter of course the folks around House Doorn salute him when he passes in his swift car—they make money out of the Ex-Kaiser, do they not?—but accept charity from him at his gift house, the Wilhelm Hospital, not they; rather die without benefit of doctors and medicines facing the manure heap of their fathers.

House Doorn is William's second home among the Dutch where he is as welcome as the Jerusalem itch. After he surrendered his sword to one of Queen 'Mina's soldiers on November 10, 1918, the Bentincks of Amerongen were politely asked and cruelly coerced to give him bed and board "for a few days." He overstayed his welcome only a year or so.

The Bentincks are a Dutch family of considerable affluence, whose oldest known ancestor emigrated to England with the sour faced, but wise Dutchman who reigned under the name of William III from 1689 to 1702.

This Dutch-English Bentinck, Hans Willem by name, seems to have been a crafty knave, much too astute to seek a favorite's portion of the English Public Domain by the boudoir route. Dutch William wasn't built that way anyhow—but he helped to reduce said Public Domain by many thousand acres just the same. Hence the Bentincks' wealth—they were always an acquisitive race and needed but a landed nucleus to grab countships and principalities this side and that side of the Channel.

Wilhelm Hohenzollern, of course, knew them by reputation and if he hadn't, he would have eaten his head off at their expense just the same, for, as stated, he

never hesitated to inflict his company (including forty to sixty Foot and Horse) on any titled or moneyed personage, willing or unwilling.

Of course not a man in the throng of field marshals, generals, courtiers, colonels, scribes, doctors, cooks, bar-keepers and other flunkeys, attending the Ex-Kaiser on his flight (started November 9, 1918) who did not know him a lath painted to look like steel—just the same when he broke away from them on the morning of the tenth at Station Eysden, Belgian-Dutch frontier, they gasped like a net full of stock-fish thrown onto shore.

What was he up to, goose-stepping like mad and unbuckling the long knife by his side?

The war lord was making straight for a soldier seated on the curb at breakfast, onions, cheese and buttermilk. Was William going to congratulate the chap on his digestive organs or barter for them?

No, indeed, the "bloke" called "Majesty" stood bowing and scraping over the dough boy, offering his sword and repeating over and over again: "I am the German Emperor and surrender to Queen Wilhelmina."

It happened to be a dark morning; station house and surroundings were steeped in gray mist. Those German Imperial lackies weren't at all sure whether they were on Belgian or Dutch soil. Suppose that buttermilk-cheese-and-onion-fiend was a subject of King Albert: the German Emperor surrendering to Belgium! Presto, the Belgians would flay him alive and sell his hide for riding breeches and souvenirs, armistice or no armistice. Besides no one in that crew knew whether the armistice talked about when they ran away had come off as scheduled.

A mess,—he's always getting into a mess, getting *us* into messes! But for once William had blundered wisely if not well. The soldier dropped the onion he was carving on the curb, rose mechanically, discharged his cheese-and-buttermilk sundae from below a drooping mustache, dropped his left hand upon the orange

braid ornamenting his pants and lifted his right to his tin helmet. Next he grabbed the sword handed to him and stared open-mouthed at the man who had interrupted his feeding.

They say "all claret would be port if it could," but this Dutch soldier was evidently a blockhead of blockheads. He might have taken William by the neck and pushed him across the line into Belgium to seek mercy where some of his gravest crimes against women and children and old men cried to heaven.

"Von Buclow and subordinate generals are obeying my orders," he said at the Berlin palace on August 23, 1914 when General-in-Chief Count Moltke protested against the pillage, incendiarism, rape, razings of villages and towns and wholesale shootings of civilians in Belgium; "250 Belgian traitors in petticoats and long frocks shot at Andene; 29 at Liege, 50 at Seilles——"

"Served them right!" said the then Kaiser, "for as I wrote to my venerable ally of Austria, we must continue to cut throats and squander good lead on women, children, old men and youths lest the war last longer than financially convenient."

The Belgians had heard the echo of these words, and grabbing the tallest oak in the Ardennes, dipped it in the Scheldt while the river was running with the people's blood, and wrote on the Heaven's blue canopy: "Revenge, R-e-v-e-n-g-e, REVENGE." And that noodle of a Dutch soldier clicked his sabots together, grinned from ear to ear and grunted "all right" in Hollandish,—he was anxious to get back to his ladylike menu, the glutton!

Swordless and prisoner of war to the little Dutch Majesty, the Ex-Kaiser mounted his own train, just arrived. It would take him miles upon miles away from that ugly Belgian frontier,—nothing else counted for the moment! Yes, a story he overheard as he dozed in a corner of his parlor car did. Said Lieutenant Colonel von Wagner to Chamberlain Baron Loch: "Majesty

played in luck, for, as to prisoners' Rights and Privileges, all depends on one's captor. There was my brother-in-law, Count Rauden, prisoner of war on an English hospital ship, crossing the Channel when one of our own brave gun boats began bombarding it with sugar loaf shells. The English were preparing to load their wounded into small boats and my brother-in-law ran up to the commanding officer, saluted, introduced himself, and citing paragraph this or that of the Geneva, or another convention, claimed a seat in one of the boats.

"What did that English brute do? He kicked my brother-in-law, a count of the Empire, in the stomach and said, 'To hell with your convention, swim or drown, you German swine.' And they allowed my brother-in-law, a prisoner of war of King George, to go down like a poisoned rat."

CHAPTER XXI

Meanwhile the wires between Amerongen and The Hague were waxing exceedingly hot. Said the Minister of Foreign Affairs: "You must take him in, *must*. Amerongen is our last hope and the Queen will not hear of a refusal."

"She won't, eh?" said Bentinck. "Well, tell her from me she's got an able bodied German husband, drawing a nifty salary from the State. Here is Henry's opportunity to show that he is a patriot and has the interests of the country at heart." And Bentinck hung up the receiver. But the Minister of Foreign Affairs can always command a wire, and when he got Bentinck once more on the phone, he talked so long and earnestly and made such vast promises as to royal orders and decorations and other favors, the count at last capitulated on one condition, namely, that the Dutch Government "would guarantee to feed the brute and his fellow-brutes."

That settled and the petty cash book for the Majesty of Germany started, Count Bentinck rather overdid the thing when he ordered the parcel of men servants at the station to welcome William with plentiful "*Hochs the Kaiser*." It was like hallooing "*Vive*" to a man led to the gallows.

But William saw no incongruity in these proceedings. Smiling benignly on the baker's dozen of shouters and wondering why, in thunder, the villagers kept their mouths so tightly shut, he allowed himself to be driven to the castle.

"I command a cup of good English tea and at once!" he said gruffly, interrupting Bentinck's little speech of "welcome in my home."

Count Bentinck, naturally offended, conveyed the order downstairs in no amiable mood and "cook" regarded the lordship's grievance as a personal affront. She not only made very bad tea, letting it draw too long, but carefully removed the tasty buns and scones she had baked from the tray, substituting baker's bread and store butter for the home product. Talk of the worm's turning! William had to be content with that sort of "high tea" for more than six weeks. Only after he had learned "to behave himself" was he allowed a taste of the Scotch girl's wonderfully fine baking.

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On his first day at Castle Amerongen, a very gorgeously appparelled soldier-man came down to lunch half an hour after the bell had sounded. Behold the General of Horse, laced coat, flying monkey jacket, *sabretasche* and all! And the padded chest groaning under a veritable load of royal orders and decorations, eagles, elephants, horses, oxen, crosses and stars. Moreover, ribbons galore and clanking spurs! And a face like the Queen of Sheba's, when King Solomon (or was it David?) held his nose and remarked that she had sat far too long on the camel with the skin disease. Three generals, six colonels and no end of captains and lieutenants dogged the Great's One's heels on the grand staircase.

Of course the Majesty was preceded by his grand marshal in red and gold, three cornered hat under arm, ivory staff in hand. If Griffith had been there with his camera man the world would be richer for a telling picture of Imperial flap-doodle.

Into Count Bentinck's dining room the platoon of ravenous Prussians marched with much rattle of decorations, swords and spurs. Witness bristling mustachios, cognac-noses and miens and faces drenched with arro-

gance, petrified with inborn "I-am-better-than-thou-dog."

Some kings take their ballet to war; Prince Napoleon saved ten thousands of French in the Crimea by that means, as typhus passed by tents ringing with laughter and flying skirts; poor Milan of Servia lost battle and crown because he thought more of his chorus girls than the right kind of *Fluglemans*; Louis XV once made peace prematurely because the Papal Legate had forbidden his mistress to go to the Majesty in Flanders.

Willie, the Crown Prince, profited by these examples, established some third rate cabaret-brothels in his camp and lost Verdun.

William would have liked to have taken the notorious Philo Eulenburg, Imperial *maitre-en-titre*, but dared not offer Hindenburg a shock of such magnitude. So he had to be content with a brace of cooks—in the field one must not seek to eat better than at home! General Count Moltke, since dead, used to speculate on the possible fate of these culinary artists, if per chance caught by the Americans. (Moltke's wife is a French woman and his table is equal to the old Cafe Martin.)

"Will they set William's cooks to work in their own mess?" he mused. "Certainly not—self preservation first! They will ship them to New York and get them jobs on the Bowery or in Mott Street!"

During those four years of war, William's palate, never above Third Avenue menus, became so used to rank diet, that the good things his host offered both irritated and appalled him. Irritated because he knew them to be better than his own, appalled because he didn't know whether Wilhelmina or himself would have to foot the bill.

So he spoiled the very excellent turtle soup for the roomful of people by roaring out to General von Plessen: "Is Schweinecke responsible for this mess?"

Plessen, with his mouth full, rose hastily, clicked his heels together and snorted through his nose: "May it

please your Majesty, Schweinecke is busy unloading the baggage."

"Then why wasn't Katzellenbogen ordered to prepare my lunch?"

Up rose another general, removed two yards of soup-embroidered serviette from his manly bosom, clicked his heels together and crowed in a hurt falsetto: "Beg your Majesty's pardon a thousand times, Katzellenbogen too is busy with the baggage."

"Fine baggage of an entourage, using the All-Highest's mouth-cooks for porters, while I am dying for something decent to put my teeth into."

Under ordinary circumstances such Imperial disapproval would have called for *gore au gratin* and at once, pairs of generals, marshals, colonels, majors and lieutenants calling each other out to die on the field of honor, or continue living minus an ear, nose, leg or other thing. But these were *not* ordinary circumstances. They were prisoners of war and their "sublime master," while the All-Highest and the Most Gracious and all that, was at liberty to scold, but could not punish. They were making up their minds, then, to retain their ears, legs, noses, etc., their lives even, William's displeasure notwithstanding, when Hendrick took a hand.

Hendrick was the Dutch waiter, substituting for Rieger, the former Kaiser's body-chasseur, and at this precise moment the devil must ride him to discharge one or more spoonfuls of mustard sauce onto William's bald pate.

The sauce, fit for a king, was as hot as fire could make it, and the mustard, pepper and other condiments it boasted rendered it still less suitable for outside decoration on a soft spot.

Getting very red in the face, William started up with a shout of anguish and in doing so, upset the rest of Hendrick's tray. Down came boiled beef, cresses and the rest of the sauce over the raving Majesty's fore-

head, cheeks and mustachios, over his shoulders, his sleeves and the glittering menagerie on his chest.

If an American air-ace had dropped a petard on Amerongen Castle, exactly into the midst of the Imperial Company, that company could have been no more horrified and scandalized. All the generals, marshals, colonels, majors and lieutenants rose *pari passu*, shouted condolences, damned Dutch waiters, offered serviettes, hair tonic, their handkerchiefs even, forgot to click their heels and exhibited other signs of acute mental distress.

As to the "sublime master," he turned piebald! The head destined to wear a crown, sizzling under layers of mustard and cress; cuts of beef instead of laurel wreaths; hot air for incense—"too-awful-for-words," "ghastly," "pyramidally-lese-majeste," all gurgled, spit, blasphemed and swore at once!

If it had happened in the dear Fatherland, ten years at hard labor for Hendrick, but in a foreign country—who knows? Wilhelmina might take it amiss even if they cut off a single one of the Dutch waiter's ears! Precedents, most tell-tale precedents! German courts had ordered the execution of Don Carlos for murdering the correspondent of the Cologne Gazette and France handed Queen Christina of Sweden her passports because she had made one of her lovers a head shorter—just one head.

But as usual, *Gott* showed his representative, William, the way out, and that way led straight through the great folding doors and up the grand staircase. In fact, Majesty retired to his All-Highest apartments and had the All-Highest grub—ten courses—brought up to him by an orderly. Hendrick got damned thrice with each mouthful.

Maybe—such is the depravity of human kind,—maybe Hendrick, after a scolding from old Bentinck, indulged in the Dutch version of "I should worry," but he *did* sit up and rubbed his eyes when the Imperial

Court Marshal handed him a bill of some ten thousand marks for a ruined monkey jacket, a ditto uniform coat and breeches.

"Getting off *verdammt* cheap, my lad," quoth his Marshalship, pulling at his mustache, "we didn't charge you a copper for the medals and decorations spoiled, for we have duplicates and triplicates of these and Majesty doesn't want to be hard on you. But if peace comes and the Kings of Bavaria, Württemberg and Saxony, and their High Mightinesses of Reuss-Schleitz-Greiz-Lobenstein and Eberswalde, not to forget the Burgomaster of Lubeck, decide to prosecute for insult to Majesty because of soiling their medals, you had better run straight off to Sumatra and get eaten by a tiger or the cannibals. *Pros't Malzeit.*"

That bill, by the way, still remains unpaid and the tiger and human man-eaters in Queen 'Mina's empire have to get along, as well as they can, on rice-fed coolies.

CHAPTER XXII

William's debut at Amerongen was stormy enough, but entirely of a piece with the course he had followed since the death of his grandfather made him heir apparent. As we have seen, he opened his Big-Head campaign by browbeating his mother and all but fisticuffing his sisters during the reign of the HUNDRED DAYS. On June 15, 1888 (the death day of Frederick III), he discarded the bridle of common every day decency altogether, and the bit was still between his teeth when he entered the Bentinck household, a guest *par-order-de Mufti*. But he was made to spit it out and discard it for good on that very afternoon. And a little bit of a ninety-five pound woman pulled off the trick.

Said the Countess Elizabeth to the Count Godard: "If you don't compel that German swine to behave at our table, I will."

"But he can't help his manners. They are as indigenous to him as his withered arm," pleaded Papa.

"Well," said the countess, "if he *must* be a boor, he must go where boorishness is appreciated or doesn't count. The next time William or any of his gang show temper, the whole lot will be turned out into the high road. They may live in their automobiles or in tents or go to jail, but they can't stay at a house chatelained by your daughter."

Of course the pill was heavily sugar-coated by the time it reached William's palate, but the threat of instant dislodgement, and prospects of a gipsy life, or jail—for what was Wilhelmina to do with him, when even the mild Bentinck refused to keep the animal?—worked the desired reform after a protracted period of

the sulks. Gradually, very gradually, it dawned upon the Ex-Kaiser that he is an outcast, that no one wants him; that there had been a turning of tables!

Like the insane Louis of Bavaria, he had often reflected during the past thirty years whether the people "deserved" to see his Glorious Majesty, and to-day they told him face to face, that a little Dutch girl had decreed that even though Ex-Emperor and Ex-King, he didn't deserve to put his feet under the same table with hers unless he gave a good imitation of what Lizzie, the parlor maid, calls a "gentleman."

"Reminds me of 'The Lion's Ride on Giraffe Back' ballad," quoth the Court Marshal.

"With such like rider" (as the Countess)

"Biting and kicking is of no avail."

"Damn the hussy," shouted William, "if she ever comes to Berlin, I will have her run out of town."

"By all means," said the Court Marshal, "but may it please Majesty not to forget, that we ourselves must be in Berlin first."

"None of your Maximilian Harden impertinences, *Herr*," cried William in a rage.

The Courtier bowed profoundly. "Your Majesty's message to the Countess—?"

"She will never again be admitted to my table,—that is my last word."

"Your Majesty has decided then to live upstairs, eat all your meals here, while we, the entourage, must seek rations in the village and neighborhood?"

The Ex-Kaiser nodded. "I have no further commands for you to-day," he snorted in a voice meant to be cutting. And as he started for the window: "Tell Bentinck I will grant no further audiences on the subject. Moreover, if he knew what was good for the Countess Elizabeth, he would give her the damnedest spanking she ever had."

In his own All-Highest estimation he was still the great-I-Am though the Armistice terms, dictated, by heck, in London, Paris and—"pfui, pfui!"—Brussels, instead of Spa, the Belgian Potsdam for the time being, had arrived at Amerongen in the meantime.

But what of it? More "scraps of paper"! Hadn't he ordered his Chancellor and generals to sign anything to give him a chance to make good his escape? He had retired for a few days, a week perhaps,—afterward to reappear in greater glory. Chancellor Max (Prince Max of Baden) and old Hindenburg had promised faithfully, on their big word of honor, and maybe "John" (Count Bernsdorf), former Ambassador in Washington (dismissed February 3, 1917), would succeed in having "Wilson's throat cut"—by one of his agents.

To that throat-cutting proposition William stuck as a drowning man sticks to his life preserver that doesn't preserve. Wilson (who invented the slogan "No peace with the Hohenzollerns") out of the way, the coalition of Kings, George, Victor, Karl, Tino and their family connections, Christian of Denmark, Haakon of Norway, and the Swedish Gustaf, not to forget other German-French-Roumanian and Bulgarian kinsmen and kinswomen, would quickly hoist him back into the saddle, for wasn't he destined by the grace of *Gott* to ride while the rest of the world walked, or crawled?

Yes, indeed, after "*his armies*" had had time to get their breath, he would command Hindenburg to light his pipe with that miserable scrap of paper done at Spa, and send one of his boots to Lloyd George, and another to Clemenceau, to lick, even as the twelfth Charles dispatched a pair of his soiled and worn riding breeches to Stockholm to preside over Parliament, while he, the king, idled in Turkey.

To be sure, there was disquieting news from Berlin and Kiel, but like uprisings had occurred under grand-uncle Frederick William IV, and Grandfather William

had drowned them in a sea of blood. That happened seventy years ago, and means for blood letting had marvellously increased since. Just wait till William II adds "*Bomba*" (Italian for bomb thrower) to his fifty other odd titles, and 'pon word, "those socialist hounds that made me attend their rotten conference in civies and wouldn't rise when I came in—see what will happen to them!"

William ordered his Adjutant, Lieutenant von Hinter, to fetch the *lèse-majesté* records. He had always wished to reach the 1,000 years' mark; here was his opportunity. Up to the Armistice, "his" judges had condemned so and so many of "his subjects" to suffer imprisonment for insult to Majesty to the tune of 800 years and more.

"We will round out the number to a thousand and start afresh. Yes, indeed, with the good German *Gott's* help we will complete another 1,000 years before joining our worshipful ancestress, Saint Hedwig, Countess of the Empire, in the Elysian Fields!"

"Does Majesty expect to find the great Frederick there too?" inquired von Hinter with a soupçon of incredulity in the tone of his voice.

"*Maulhalten* (Shut your mouth)," commanded William. "Of course he is in heaven. *Gott* wouldn't *think* of condemning a king of Prussia, even if all the parsons in Christendom call him heathen."

But resounding bravado notwithstanding, William was persuaded that to lie low for the time being was his best bet. What did he care for a parcel of Dutchmen and Dutchwomen anyhow? If he must pattern after an English clerk, or managing director, to retain a foothold in Amerongen, well and good. So much the worse for "Uncle Bertie" (King Edward VII) who maintained that nephew William couldn't to save his life.

And so, after a week or two, we find him again at the Bentinck family table, eating with his knife and grunt-

ing "thank you" once or twice in the course of the courses. But no more braided coat and monkey jacket; there was no one worth dressing up for. A simple general's uniform was good enough for these village folk, and as for royal decorations, the grand cross of the Green Ass must suffice.

"Majesty," he was told one fine morning, "a thousand and one pardons, Majesty, they have gone and done it. They have actually established a republic in Berlin."

"Pooh," quoth Old Ex. "Why not tell me that the Sultan is on the way to Rome to kiss the Pope's foot?"

"May it please your Majesty to read these wires from Prince Max ——"

"Don't mention that humbug—he has gone over to the Socialists."

"And the Socialists—if Majesty will only listen—are on top in Berlin, Breslau, Königsberg—everywhere."

"Koenigsberg, *my* Koenigsberg, the town where Prussia's kings are crowned? Man alive, how dare you! it's treason, rank treason," thundered William at top voice while belaboring the desk with his clenched fist.

And with a face as black as the wrath of Satan he added, snarling savagely, "Unless you can prove all you have said, Hinter, prove it to *Me* to the dotlet on the 'I,' I will have you cashiered this very day, cashiered *cum infamia*."

He rose and pointed to the door: "Out of my sight, report yourself to the Commanding General."

As it happened, that individual, General von Gontard, entered the room just then with a bunch of dispatches and a parcel of London, Paris, and Berlin papers.

"Majesty," he cried like a sob sister pulling John D. Jr's leg, "the worst that monarchy has suffered since the tragedy on Place de Grève! The red flag on

Schloss and *Rathaus*, on churches and barracks, the French Revolution duplicated in your Majesty's *Residentz-Stadt*. Same thing in Magdeburg" (reading from the dispatches), "Cologne, Dusseldorf, Brandenburg—"

For a moment William stood petrified. The general announced that the *unbelievable* had happened. And as a Prussian General, (as every one knows) can't say wrong, there must be a grain of truth in the events reported. But of course it couldn't *all* be true! "A revolt, yes, we will concede a revolt!"

"If I understand correctly, public order has been upset in several places," legato'd William stiffly; "well, it was to be expected when the All-Highest is away. But what of it? A few hundred, or thousand, of our subjects will get their skin full of grape shot—very regrettable, no doubt, but decidedly to our advantage. When my people find out that life without the Hohenzollerns' guidance and authority is simply unendurable, they will, they *must* recall their Kaiser.

"But take notice you and all of you"—he talked as if he was addressing a mass meeting—"I will demand unconditional surrender, punishment, ruthless, terrible to fit the crime of disloyalty, of insults offered to Divine Right."

"It will be your Majesty's privilege," meekly suggested von Gontard.

"My *duty*, my *verdammt* duty, the king's and emperor's all-highest duty," shouted William, with another fistic onslaught on his desk.

"Precisely, Majesty always coins the right word at the right time," whined von Gontard, "but as I was about to submissively report further, Majesty's thankless subjects in Berlin, and other places named, established the republic—"

"As I already had the honor to report—" gasped von Hinter, taking courage.

"You too," shouted William, glaring at von Gon-

tard. "This poor imbecile" (indicating von Hinter) "ventured to suggest the same thing, damn his impudence! but a commanding general of mine tooting in the same horn, passes belief. All gone stark, staring mad, I reckon! Well, I had enough of your nonsense, I am sick and tired of it!"

He motioned von Hinter to open the door. "I recommend a turn in the open to your Excellency!" he sneered at crestfallen von Gontard. "Hinter is suspended, and no more audiences to-day!"

He shut the door behind the pair with a bang.

CHAPTER XXIII

Next morning, when the valet-in-chief "most submissively" inquired of his Majesty: "What dress or uniform?" William, in his usual abrupt way, replied: "Sanders," "Jorgen." These are his Marine Dressers, always in attendance like his Civies and Military Dressers.

"Admiral, English Navy," commanded William, when the pair bobbed up like puppets from a box.

They *were* surprised but, loving their bacon, did not show it, and began pulling out drawers, opening cabinets and heating electric irons. When they got pants onto the Majesty—not an easy task, for William likes to make out that he can balance himself on his bad leg, the left, and when that breaks down, as it is most likely to do, there is a crash—while the Ex-Kaiser was making an elephant out of a mole hill—a speck of dust, which, under the lash of his tongue, took on Chimborazo-like proportions—the door opened and breakfast was carried in.

"Ex" waived it aside. "I will be down for breakfast—have plenty of scones and buns and marmalade—but I want a table to myself,—report my orders to your master."

Breakfast bell rang when William was admiring himself, fully dressed in English Admiral's togs, in a tall looking glass, but he fussed and fumed about for another thirty minutes. "The George" (an English decoration) "made faces at the 'Black Eagle' as those fools had arranged the two. And where was the Order of the Elephant? Had the master of ceremony taken leave of his senses? The 'Oxen of Mecklenburg' were conspicuous for their absence, too, yet we are living tem-

porarily in Wilhelmina's country, Wilhelmina, who married a Mecklenburger. Some day he would have marshals with enough gumption to come in when it rains," etc, etc.

Having thus relieved himself, Majesty shouted "two *Fouriers* with staffs, a chamber lackey, the naval attaché and General von Moltke. Five minutes' limit."

All these flunkys had been in waiting an hour, for imperial slaves must work automat fashion. Now they mount stairs, jack boots, clanking swords, stamping halberts! red hands and wooden faces!

On the landing, the obligato hocus-pocus! "Fall into line," "Present arms," "the Imperial and Royal salute!"

Thereupon William—*deus ex machina*, mustachios waxing heavenward, face as stern and haughty as King Herod's when he ordered the slaughter of the Innocents!

"Breakfast Room," "March," snarled the Majesty. The court marshal bowed to the ground and walked backward to the staircase, officers, men and other flunkys closed ranks and advanced, the Ex-Kaiser following.

At the door of the breakfast room the procession halted and the cavalcade disposed itself as on the landing. Three knocks by the court marshal's staff; Sanders and Jorgen threw open the folding doors: "His imperial and royal majesty, the Kaiser, Admiral of the Fleet," shouted General von Dommes into the room, causing the Bentincks to rise hastily and stand at attention.

Not until then, stage set and waiting, William strode in, doffing his plumed hat instead of other salutation,—Hamlet's ghost, as Salvini and Booth knew the mailed knight, never looked half so touch-me-at-your-peril-Sir!

Count Bentinck led the Majesty to a solitary table in the bay window and shoved a chair under him with a pleasant "*Mahlzeit*," and "fine morning, Sir." But

the little man in the big regimentals wasn't wound up to talk; he merely gave a haughty grunt as he dug a spoon into his orange.

And even as he did so, he shouted across his host's table to the court marshal at the door: "My dispatches! The papers; *aber ploezlich!* You remain where you are!"

The young Countess Elizabeth blushed for the boor. "I won't have this poltroon use my dining room like a tap-house parlor," she whispered to her father.

"La, la," smoothed he, "the manners of the all-highest and of the paltry singularly coincide! Why excite yourself, child!"

With the chops and French fried came the sub-librarian with a tray full of dispatches and the press, and the marshal, of course, drew Majesty's attention to the fact.

"Don't you see that I am at breakfast?" roared the Ex. "Take your tray into the summer house and prepare my table."

But immediately afterwards impulse, that force he never could withstand a single moment, seized him to devour the news. He pushed his plate away. "Finger bowl, hurry up!"

Now with majesty and entourage, finger-bowling is a matter of no little consequence. First, Majesty dips his fingers into the basin, spills some of its contents and swears because there isn't enough water. Second, he laps up what there is and tosses it about in his mouth to and fro, up and down, so all his teeth get the benefit of the laundrying. Then he squirts it back in the basin (and sometimes into his opposite's plate), a very elaborate process that doesn't come naturally to man, but has to be acquired by long attendance at the Berlin Court.

On this pregnant morning, Majesty dispensed with the hand washing, but improved on the fountain to the extent of all but drowning a canary bird, caged on the

opposite wall. Birdie was frightened and fluttered from one end of the cage to the other, but got no sympathy from William.

"Gold fish—the proper animal for dining rooms—would have enjoyed that contretemps of mine," he snorted at the old Count in passing.

Of course it was all play-acting,—a scheme to hoodwink the Bentincks and the household into the belief that the news from Berlin had not soiled even the tips of the imperial jack boots. And that air of highfalutin superiority and nonchalance he did not drop until he sat alone behind drawn blinds in the summer house.

With a king "alone" does not mean absolute loneliness; it merely indicates his freedom from guards, marshals, courtiers, flunkies and other nuisances. Just the same, he is a watched man; there is always somebody in hiding following his every movement, observing all he does and says. Aye, his very thoughts, expressed in face or movements, become matters of record.

See him fall on the papers, swallowing the big scare-heads as a stork gobbles minnows and frogs *en bloc*! "More socialist sheets! An anarchist rag! Red Flag. What miscreant sent me this damned thing?"

"Here's another Berlin wire."

"*Hohenzollern, Amerongen, Holland.*

"*I have the honor to announce the establishment of the Republic of the German Empire.*

"*(Signed) Ebert, President.*"

The ax had fallen—after all, the incredible rumors von Hinter—damn his soul!—had voiced and Gontard had backed up in his halfhearted, "receding-chin" fashion, were true,—*his subjects were trying to do without Him.*

"But who was this Ebert, who exalted *lèse-majesté* to the dignity of acts of state?"

Ringling of bells, electric and otherwise, stamping of

feet! "Fetch me all the Gothas" (Almanac de Gotha, in three or four volumes, chronicling German royalty, peerage, nobility and gentry).

The little volumes in red, blue and green arrived before he could get out another "*Verdammt*."

"Help me find this confounded name, Ebert, E-b-e-r-t."

William, as fit, handled the Princes' lists, the attendant tackled the peerage. "Not here, may it please Majesty!"

"Look into the Gentry Almanac—may be a simple '*von*,' this Ebert person."

No "von" Ebert, neither here nor there!

"*Canaille*, must belong to the rabble, couldn't be otherwise!" snarled William. Then: "Take the bunch of Berlin papers outside and find out who this is,—but *ploetzlich*, if you like your job."

"May it please Majesty, perhaps the latest 'London Daily Mail'——"

"Shut up. All the Northcliffe rags are to be cut up for the servants' W. C's. That's where they belong. 'The Times' and all."

The Ex-Kaiser bent over the 'Berlin Lokal Anzeiger.' Suddenly yells of rage and surprise. "Majesty has no further commands,—be off," he shouted to the sub-librarian when he got his breath.

After that cowed and browbeaten individual had sneaked, presto, the real William,—a rare close-up! His jaw dropped, eyes flaring, cheeks chalky white, mouth widening into sickening sneers!

"A journeyman saddler successor to William II, Emperor and King! Here it's black on white, egad, von Kupfer, (editor of the Lokal Anzeiger) wouldn't dare print it if it wasn't a fact, a damnable, rotten scummy fact! Journeyman saddler, *my* successor! Heaven where is your lightning, *Gott*, where is your wrath!"

William closed his hand on the speaking tube as if it

was Ebert's throat. "I want Plessen, Gontard, Frankenburg, Litorff, Grimmann, Moltke, Hirschfeld, Ilseman, Knauff and the rest on the double quick." But a good half hour passed before all these generals and minor officers had been pulled out of Morpheus' and other arms. For William had brought some forty helmeted and spurred soldiemen of all ranks to Amerongen and the Bentincks, unprepared for a barrackful of Germans, had to billet the majority on the village and neighborhood.

Most of them had been up all night devouring dispatches and newspapers and discussing excitedly those very stories that made William, at this very moment, quarrel with his very *Gott*. Besides: full panoply, parade uniforms, sabers, spurs and decorations appropriate to the day and hour, were in order for a visit to Majesty! Hence delays.

"Majesty!"—was he still Majesty? "William Lack-Land," said the Bulletins. The Crown Imperial had gone down, the diadem of Prussia had followed, even Brandenburg Marquisate had been wrenched from him!

"Come as you are, in your pajamas for all I care," came another phone message in a sea of gutturals.

"You old humbug," growled von Plessen, Colonel-General by the Ex-Kaiser's grace and for no other reasons,—*"I will show you."*

He hastily squeezed into soiled pajamas of the bargain counter sort, had the grand cordon of the Order of the Black Eagle, a broad scarf of yellow, watered silk fastened to his shoulder and run across his chest and body to his right hip.

At the hip end he fastened the order proper and—turned the bird upside down.

He clapped a surtout on this newfangled court costume and walking towards the palace, met Generals von Gontard, von Frankenburg, and von Litorff on the high road. These three nobodies were in full regimentals

and horror stricken when they noticed that von Plessen, barring the outer shell, was ready for the bathroom or bed.

"I see Excellency was taken by surprise?" ventured one of the *terzetto*, raising his eyebrows. The others squinted to the same effect.

"Not at all, not at all," smiled von Plessen blandly, "fact is, Majesty phoned 'pajamas, for all I care,' and gets what he wants. It has always been his heart's desire to get what he wants; now he's got it, armies' bayonets and peoples' boots in back!"

The three generals, in the meanwhile joined by others, wagged their heads surprisedly, sadly. "Excellency seems to take the German Republic and the rest seriously," snorted General von Grimann, using his nose like a trumpet which, with the German military, indicates both high disdain and surpassing superiority.

"Seriously?" repeated Plessen, "I take it so *verdammt* seriously, that I will bet my pension against a doughnut that mine, and yours and the other gentlemen's career is over and that our salaries have already been countermanded."

"And in this spirit you dare approach his sacred majesty?" cried General von Hirschfeld, beside himself with loyal ardor.

"If we weren't all clowns in a farce, the succeeding acts and the end of which none of us can foresee, I would order the Major General (inclining his head to Hirschfeld) to his quarters for impertinence and insubordination," said von Plessen, now every inch the Colonel-General. "But that aside," he added more pleasantly, pointing towards the castle, "our quondam Master is waiting,—the first time in his life! Let's go to him before he murders poor Platen" (von Platen, court marshal).

"Poor Platen" looked like a puppy just rescued from a watery grave, and his attempts to infuse some order into this meeting between the dethroned sovereign

and his Paladins were piteous failures, waving plumed hat and ivory staff withstanding.

The Ex-Kaiser had but a single phrase for all persons met, and being so sparing of words, might have made it grammatical at least. But, as it happened, the all-highest mind didn't function that way.

"Therefore," he addressed his nobody-generals (no longer *his*) "therefore, what do you say to it?"

Of course they babbled of "purely temporary arrangements, that could never, never endure," of the "ingratitude of the people, damnable rabble," of "old Prussian-loyalty," of "the ten thousands of anarchists that would decorate (by and by) as many lamp-posts, dangling by the guts of socialists," and other things pleasant to flattery-hungry ears.

But the Ex-Kaiser cut short their well rehearsed slip-slops.

"His Excellency, Colonel General von Plessen," he pronounced very staccato, "will communicate certain decisions to you."

He handed von Plessen an official wire. Then added with his wonted aplomb: "His Majesty has no further commands at present."

All the nobody-generals clicked their heels and retreated (not the first time!) backwards to the door, von Plessen following. At first he, too, backed, but a single glance at the wire in his hand made him walk like a man. This Colonel-General was no red-light-burning, sacrificing, ancestor-worshipping Chink! The dispatch indicating that William was "a dead one," the worm turned!

"Clear the guard-room, assemble in the guard room," he commanded when the party, leaving the castle, reached the draw bridge.

Before the Ex-Kaiser arrived at Amerongen, the guard room, so styled, was used as a hot house for plants from Queen Wilhelmina's exotic Empire. Now

the detachment of the Dutch army, assigned to watch the Ex-Kaiser, smoked their pipes and aired their sabots in the place.

"Attention!" commanded the Colonel-General when the nobody-generals stood in line between wooden shoes and discarded flower pots, "Attention!" "You gentlemen are commanded to report to the Minister of Defense——"

"Minister of *Defense*, and who may that be, Excellency?" crowed three or four Nobodies.

"Read your '*Lokal Anzeiger*' and find out," snorted von Plessen peremptorily. "Report to the Minister of Defense" (with abundant emphasis on the last word) "in Berlin within three days."

"But we can't abandon His Majesty!" shouted the Nobodies, racketing with their heels, swords, eyebrows and ears.

"If you can't, by all means forfeit your jobs and pensions," assented von Plessen soothingly. He added with fine sarcasm: "To the Minister of Defense it's all the same, I am sure."

"I won't serve under the damned proletarian anyhow," shouted von Frankenburg. And von Litorff, von Grimmann, and von Gontard swore big oaths to the same effect.

"Please yourselves," smiled von Plessen. "Like Majesty, I have no further commands for you, hence wish you a very good morning."

"Is Excellency leaving too?" cried several Nobodies.

"You said it,—first train and be advised that to-day's lunch will be our *Henker's Mahlzeit* at this castle (*Henker's Mahlzeit* means Hangman's feed, a doomed person's last repast before the Dance on Air). "After that, everybody for himself and the devil take the hindmost."

"But won't Excellency explain?" There were heaps of anxiety, even entreaty in those rasping voices. All

the hauteur, "the frozen-in-high-falutinness" had oozed out of the Nobodies when their meal ticket was in question.

"Well, the plain fact is, that Majesty won't pay for your keep out of his own pocket and the Berlin Government refuses salaries to soldiers dancing attendance upon the Exile. As I said before, take your choice. By the way," he added, "one of you will be retained. Majesty will presently send for the chosen one. In the meanwhile, let's go—packing."

"You told them—how did they take it?" demanded William, when Plessen returned.

"Accepted the inevitable, of course! A few attempts at heroics, but no '*moriamur pro rege nostro*.'"

"—, I suspected as much of the serpents I warmed in my bosom," cried William.

"Forget it, Majesty," said Plessen gayly. "You read of course that Saxony got his walking papers?"

"He *did*? Moved or kicked out?"

Being a true courtier, Plessen allowed the Majesty to think what suited him best.

"King Frederick Augustus went before the boot, but first sacked the town for a ghastly array of 'eats' and, —Dresden well nigh starving!" he answered.

"Dirty Dog," cried William, waxing fiercely indignant and forgetting that he did the very same thing when he went Amerongen-ward. "The Saxons will never forgive him his gluttony. But he was always a hog. Louise told me that more often than not he came to bed with his boots on."

"Nor did he forget a fat Holstein to supply him with cream," added Plessen. Then, leeringly; "Has Majesty news from Munich and Stuttgart?"

William shook his head while his open mouth and bulging eyes betrayed intense curiosity.

"Well, Bavaria has decamped and so has Württemberg."

"Jackbooted, like Frederick Augustus?" cried William.

"Don't know any details, but I understand they're out for good." And laughing broadly, Plessen added: "Majesty's special friend, His High-Illuminateness, the great Prince of Lippe——"

"The Buckeburg guy—if ever fool deserved hanging, that chap was surely born and bred for the halter. Didn't he found the Order of the Green Ass solely to make me Grand Cross? Now really, Plessen, did the loving Lippers string him up?"

"Sorry to disappoint, Majesty,—according to last accounts, he got safely away and is now eating his head off at the Hotel Adlon, Berlin."

"*My Adlon*," cried the Ex-Kaiser. "First thing you do in Berlin is to buttonhole the manager and command him in my name to kick Buckeburg into Pariser Platz. Either Lippe goes instanter, or the director, tell him that with my compliments."

On this day, luncheon was a gay affair at Castle Amerongen—not at all the *Henker's Mahlzeit* Plessen had pictured. For about thirteen of the fifteen German sovereigns had been accounted for "running like scared dogs," as William put it sub rosa, and there's a subtle joy in one's friends' discomforts, you know. Moreover Ludwig, "that Bavarian moon calf" had actually offered to take on William's job, when the Kaiser had rendered himself "Ex."

The German Imperial crown on Ludwig's beery head! It was to laugh, of course—just the same *Gott's* judgment had overtaken the traitor, and well done!

After the ladies had retired, William ordered up one of the two hundred odd baskets of Champagne he brought from Spa to drink the departing generals' health. But that polite excuse was forgotten ere the popping of corks really began, for the Ex-Kaiser insisted on "shedding a tear and a glass" in memory of

each of his colleagues now throneless and landless. That took quite a number of magnums. In fact, if the All-Highest had ordered a goose-step parade when the party broke up, those important acrobatics, dear to the Prussian heart, would have confirmed the Mighty Prince of Reuss's well known opinion that "goose-stepping is a sorry and degenerate practice, fit only for such robber-upstarts as the Hohenzollerns."

CHAPTER XXIV

*“ Given at Amerongen, November 28th,
1918, under Our All-Highest signature
and the imprint of Our Imperial Seal.
“ Wilhelm.”*

On the day mentioned three frock-coated individuals (“ought to have worn swallow-tails, the know-nothings,” blustered William’s entourage)—a terzetto of owl-faced gents were led over the drawbridge, happily at rest since the last robber knight was hanged, past Majesty’s sabotaged gaolers and past blear-eyed Dommes, (Ex-Prussian General and Grand Chamberlain) and up the staircase to the reception room of the personage responsible for the death of eight odd millions of human beings, for the loss of five and a half millions reported missing, and for nineteen and a half million cripples.

They found William sitting at a fine Boule desk, nervously sucking a cigarette, discarding it after a few puffs and lighting another—a way he has for relieving all highest nervous tension and killing time.

Secretary Captain von Ilseman announced: “May it please Majesty, *Herr—, Herr—, Herr—*, just arrived from Berlin.”

“Representing the Journeyman Saddler’s Government,” rasped William under his breath. Then rising, he bowed jerkily; so did the strangers.

“Your business?” inquired the Ex-Kaiser.

One of the three stepped forward and produced a sheet of foolscap paper.

“Our instructions are to ask the former German Kaiser to sign this document or one embodying its

substance if not the exact wording," he said solemnly. His two colleagues bowed assent.

In anticipation of this request, William wore gloves. You don't catch a real live Majesty touching an anarchist-rag with his bare skin! He laid the document on the desk, face down, then produced its counterpart, sprinkled with "All Highest" and "ME's" and "OUR's" in capitals.

"Ilseemann, the Imperial Seal."

The crowned eagle was affixed. Then William sat down and scrawled his signature, flourishes and all. A last reminder of sham-puissance: gold dust on the wet signature. The Exile handed his gilded resignation to the foreman of the three, nodded and turned to the window.

"Scoundrels, Swine," they didn't deserve to see the King's face! And President Ebert's emissaries evidently didn't care to look at his back! As Dommes put it: "Without 'Thank you,' or '*Mahlzeit*' they pocketed their document and walked out brazenly unconcerned as if they had come from lunch with their likes."

Let's see: William entered upon his flight on November 9th. On the same day, Prince Max announced the Kaiser's abdication. For that, during the eighteen days following, William abused him as a liar a hundred times, insisting that he had "never, never, even thought of leaving his people." But as just witnessed, on the eighteenth day of his stay at Amerongen, he set his All-Highest Hand and Seal to the document "renouncing for all future my rights to the Crown of Prussia and my consequential rights to the German Imperial Crown" (the lower case "m" in "my" is ours).

So on November 28 (1918) we have the real, honest-to-goodness discrowned William, private citizen without title or recognized name even. Worse still, a man without home and, practically, without clothes. For his

right to wear uniform had ceased and Berlin reported that his civies-wardrobe was looted during the sack of the *Schloss*. His coats and pants and vests stolen! "Sacriligious hands" had snatched the baby-blue diamond-studded garters he loved to wear when he went to see "Phili" Eulenburg, "Tütü" (the disgraced Count Moltke) and other Mignons. And now had come a letter reporting that Anarchist Liebknecht, when murdered by Prussian officers, wore a pearl gray suit, bearing earmarks of the Imperial wardrobe, namely crowned "W"s.

"I knew all along that *Gott* would punish the Despoilers of the Anointed," was William's grim comment. In fact *Gott's* interposition had his unqualified, All Highest approval.

When later the Ex-Empress joined him, she too had her tale of woe! "Liebknecht and his harlot, Rosa Luxemburg, had camped three nights in the Imperial bedroom (oh, the blasphemy of it!) and some of Auguste Victoria's latest Paris frocks went with Rosa.

"And got spoiled when my officers stabbed her to death," sneered William.

"I know," said the pious Ex-Empress, "and may all enemies of Our family perish that way!"

The Egotist-Trust "Royalty," which looks upon every hair of its head as thrice sacrosanct, thinks ordinary folks actually enjoy dying for them. "Take this ruble for stabbing the miscreant, who spat as I passed in my sledge," said the late Tzar Nicholas to a guardsman. Fifty cents for taking a man's life, but of course the guardsman had the satisfaction of killing some one who happened to offend Majesty!

William got mightily bucked up by the news of *Gott's* wrath overtaking Liebknecht and Rosa—"Ebert will surely get his, by and by," he argued—and so he graciously pleased to command a walk by Our All Highest person, outside the castle moat. Only Dommes strutted ten paces ahead and Ilseman as many be-

hind, while Dutch soldiers lurked on walls, trees and hedges,—such is royal privacy.

William walked briskly along, whirling his cane and talking to himself—he is always talking. “Now that they got my so-called abdication, Berlin will release my funds,” he mused, for Amerongen castle having a master of its own, was becoming a *verdammt nuisance*. “But—— who is that approaching? Looks like Lord —— . Good old —— , rather a bounder when you come to analyze his career, but mighty decent of him to cross the channel to see me—the first Englishman to do so.”

William expected to be entertained with a lusty chat about London women, theatres, the “Halls,” horses and yachts. Sure it was Lord —— , his grayish-white locks, baggy trousers, long-tailed Prince Albert, cane and the eyeglass! He could do no more without the eyeglass than the turtle without his shell.

The “Lord” quick-stepped when he saw William so eager, and grabbed the Ex-Kaiser’s outstretched hand right heartily, while responding to his smile of welcome.

“Just stepped off the train,” said the ‘Lord’; “was tackled by a lot of newspaper men——”

“Devil take them,” assented William.

“So happy to meet you the first go off. Remember our last rendezvous? Guild Hall. You admired the mace. ‘Nice thing to drop on Poincaré’s head,’ you said!”

“Strange,” reflected William, “the voice sounds so different and he doesn’t call me Majesty, yet Lord —— always was a stickler for etiquette. Can he have heard of this morning’s doings? Maybe he met those three undertakers at the station.”

The “Lord” kept looking at William’s head. “Damn my old fashioned collars,” worried the Ex-Kaiser, “Lord —— will tell about them at the Piccadilly Club.”

William wasn’t going to stand such boorishness.

"Lord ——," he said sharply, "what, in *thunder*, are you up to, looking me over like a pony on sale?"

The stranger repeated the name with an inflection of disdain. "Lord —— be damned," he said, "you don't catch me masquerading as that rascalion. I walked around you to get the lay of your carcass above the shoulders. You have quite a workable neck, reports to the contrary notwithstanding. It's a relief for me to see, for, Sir, I am the London hangman."

(Of course the hangman's visit to the Exile was quite unofficial and inconsequential.)

CHAPTER XXV

THE LONDON HANGMAN,—it was true then! The Allies had decided to try him. And of course trial in England meant conviction. Had he not murdered Miss Edith Cavell? He had caused the death of ten thousands of other women and girls, but the shooting of Edith Cavell overshadowed massacres even as Golgotha dwarfed Nero's living torches.

The apprehension of possible legal measures against him, awakened and emphasized by the hangman's visit, caused the Ex-Kaiser to see red in the noise of motor cars, the whir of airships, in any vessel on the nearby Rhine that might turn out a man-of-war or torpedo boat; in fact every non-Ameronger that approaches his retreat may be the bearer of fearsome orders or intentions.

If a dog barks during the night, if the solitary village fire engine is called out, if a servant having overstayed his or her leave tries to sneak into the house, if a cow or horse needs attention, if his gentlemen do not arrive at the minute set for service—all such incidents of common every day life are to his mind possible portents of disaster threatening him.

He needs air—owing to his ear troubles the air is fouled if he stays in a room more than a quarter of an hour. Exercise, excitement, sport mean physical and mental life to him, but how dare he trust himself outside of his four walls if highway and lane, woods and moat even, may yield, at any moment, an official or private avenger or vengeance seeker?

During the war things were easy enough. The newspapers were told that Majesty was on the Eastern front, while as a matter of fact, the Kaisership played

Skat with Ludendorff a hundred miles distant from the trenches in Northern France. But there are always chaps that "want to be shown," Missourians of the Press and others.

Why not? William isn't eight feet tall and has rather common features: high cheek bones, hard eyes without eyelashes, a carrotty complexion. The withered left arm can easily be obscured in Hussar uniform plus monkey jacket. Accordingly, when either of the armies needed the cordial of the Emperor's: "IT'S ME, my children," a decoy Kaiser was faked up, mustachios, medals and all, and paraded around at a safe distance to be "*hoched*" or shot at, as the case might be.

But at Amerongen or Doorn—anywhere in the insect-kingdom, for that matter—*quid pro quos* were quite impossible. For one thing, neighborhoods are too restricted—no, "close" is the better word. If your smeller is half way good you know the brand of tobacco and Schnapps each passerby poisons himself with.

No masquerading then,—yet limelight-itch is as irresistible to Majesty as the sense of caution, called cowardice in ordinary mortals.

One fine winter morn at Amerongen, the Ex-Kaiser found the moat frozen over. Very pretty! Watching skaters would while away many hours hanging heavily on Ex-Imperial hands!

"Ilseemann," he interrupted his adjutant's report on the latest jokes from *Fliegende Blätter*—William is a glutton for "jokes"—"Ilseemann, have it known downstairs and in the neighborhood, that Majesty will be pleased to cast a casual eye at skating after ten o'clock."

"Any prizes, Majesty?"

"Three wooden medals with the All-Highest 'W' for the best performers."

"They will run their legs off for Majesty's new Order of Merit," cried Ilseemann, knocking heels.

As a matter of fact, the Dutch boys and girls

worked extremely hard to amuse Majesty, five hours of it, for Majesty remained at the window from ten to one and from two to four, Count Bentinck treating relays of the moat-speeders to coffee and cakes, a little matter William neither promoted, offered reimbursement for, or even thought of. If they had been horses, he would have insisted upon proper watering and feeding, but mere human beings,—la, la.

After supper big Willie had just commenced droning into Bentinck's smarting ears his All-Highest reasons for little Willie's failures at Verdun, when he suddenly ran out of the room and shouted like mad for Ilseemann.

"Ilseemann," he said when he had his ear, "take all our available men and have the moat ice broken up. It just occurred to me that the frozen pond may be used by some miscreants persecuting my sacred person. Of course Dommes ought to have thought of destroying nature's bridge to my apartments, but what can you expect from that duffer? Still you may remind him that I haven't forgotten his failure to capture the railway between Paris and the Eastern Front! I ought to have cashiered him on that account. To-day he repays my leniency in the usual coin: base ingratitude! Rub that into Dommes and rub hard, do you hear? And—now *plötzlich*—down with that damned moat ice so your Emperor may sleep in peace."

The man who caused the death of 107,284 Americans, 1,600,000 of his own people, 1,039,600 French, 1,700,000 Russians, etc., etc., a total of 8,016,134 soldier dead (not counting civilians and women and children)—the Grand Egotist—is obsessed of and haunted by the thought that he himself is not immortal, that a bullet, a piece of steel, or poison may put an end to his idle and useless life.

Hence friends and acquaintances that invite him to dinner, tea or some feast or ceremony, are never sure when he will show up, before or after the hour set, mayhap, or not at all. When he goes motoring, three or

four cars are trotted out and he often uses up fifteen or twenty minutes deciding which shall have the honor of carrying the anointed. Maybe at the last moment he selects his "swiftest Mercédés," but as all the cars perform alike, the qualification is but another attempt to mystify folks about Majesty's movements.

It is actually painful to see the person who, for thirty years, imposed upon the world and public opinion, enter a room full of nonentities, such as his Dutch retreat affords. They have been chosen with due care, of course, either for their loyalty or easy tolerance. Yet on each and every occasion he remains for three or four minutes at the door between a brace of liveried footmen, the obsequious Dommies in front, and Ilse-mann, with drawn sword, behind.

Again and again he surveys the company awaiting him for a possible traitor or person that may say something unpleasant to him. And only after everybody has passed muster in advance, will Majesty be "graciously pleased" to accept greetings and introductions.

Persons of "known loyalty" to his cause and undoubted conventionalism of speech and manner—he dotes on commonplaces—the Ex-Kaiser sometimes honors with a handshake and a say-nothing phrase or two. But when he talks to such a one, he will never look at the individual addressed if he be friend or acquaintance. Then his eyes are forever darting to the right and left. "One never knows! Even Our *Herr* Grandfather was shot when he wasn't looking. So were Bismarck, Henry IV and a dozen others."

When, on the other hand, he can be persuaded to meet a stranger, he looks him through and through, tries to read his thoughts, to explore his unconscious mind, and if the unhappy person attempted, perchance, to pull out his handkerchief, William would either draw on him, or fall in a fit.

Of the phlegmatic Dutch he is less afraid than of

other nationalities. He wouldn't meet a Frenchman, Italian or Austrian if the fellow brought him a crown on a golden salver, and the sight of an Englishman wholly unnerves him even when Bentinck vouches for the Britisher's harmless disposition. The question: "Why do the English hate me so?" is forever on his lips. "The Cavell woman, the *Lusitania*, the torturing of English prisoners,—what of such incidents of war? Why not forget them?" he argues while bending all his thoughts and energies to see that no harm comes to himself. Cowardice accoutered! Egotism deified!

William's question as to the why of British hatred, reminds one of the plaint of the Berlin professor who, despite oceans of Latin, Greek, Hebrew and other wisdom, couldn't understand that: "*Even the Belgians don't love us Germans.*"

The Ex-Kaiser might have gained *some* credit in Belgium by opening the little hospital he gave to Amerongen to a few Belgian wounded,—there were 140,000 of them, when he fled the terrors of war. But though the villagers flatly refuse his charity—twelve beds, count 'em! two bath rooms, a German nurse, and the Imperial "W" with a crown on everything, house, dishpan and broomstick—the happy thought never occurred to him, even though he was told point-blank that the quarters at Amerongen Castle, which his servants occupied, had been intended for Belgian war victims before he claimed unwelcome hospitality.

On the other hand he thinks it quite strange that Queen Wilhelmina doesn't invite him to The Hague to attend military and naval maneuvers, races or pageants, And that husband of hers, a German prince, never yet called on him. "Boor," declares William, "Oom Paul would have known better."

As a matter of fact, royalty's apathy to William's plight is almost indecent, seeing that he looked after his crowned brothers and sisters with such exemplary solicitude during the war. Didn't he send bomb-bearing

Zeppelins over the Antwerp house, where King Albert, Queen Elizabeth and their children were sleeping? And leaving his card at Sandringham and Windsor Castle "via air raid," was that not a delicate attention on an enemy's part? If similar courtesies failed to materialize at Buckingham palace, London,—don't blame him! William sent Zeppelins to do the trick time and again, but those "blasted English" shot down or drove off his machines every time.

There were still other persons ignorant and politically unschooled enough to censure him for not having made the attempt to save the Russian Imperial family at the peace of Brest-Litovsk. Nicholas, Alix and the children—those three fine girls just budding into womanhood—were his near relatives; he had enjoyed their hospitality time and again; he had corresponded with Nicky and sworn to be his brother and friend! But to plead their cause before the ravenous beasts that sought their blood and honor wouldn't have been good politics, since they had sided with England and France. "If the Bolsheviks want to kill them, *Gott* help them."

This is the same William who insists upon selecting "the hymn of the day" when he stops at people's houses, who preaches on Sundays (in German even though his victims understand Dutch only), who moralizes against silk stockings if the leg he sees happens to belong to a girl "less than a princess or countess," the man who claims that (though temporarily shorn of political power) he is still chief Lutheran Bishop of the world. Like the eighth Henry's, William's sacerdotalism smacks of the rope and the stake decidedly.

CHAPTER XXVI

In the preceding pages the Ex-Kaiser's life in exile has been impartially summed up with the few landmarks showing above the Sahara of emptiness, uselessness and inaptitude he has chosen for his uncrowned empire. A renowned American humorist once said: "Strip a king and turn him loose among a half dozen tailors and clerks, likewise in Adam's costume, then find your anointed one! It's ten to one, that you bet on the wrong horse and hang the regalia onto a book-keeper or pants stretcher."

Fate, the furies of self destructive vanity and shortcomings of mind and heart; degeneration, the aftermath of playing with the lives and fortunes of peoples, inherent cowardice and apprehension of worse to come, physical ailments and the spectre of Cancer forever grinning in the background, have reduced William to the *status quo* of a mere human. What is left?

A grayish-white peacock, strutting about in borrowed plumage, an old-man-a-mumbling, buttonholing gardener, valet, count, clergyman or peasant to make each listen to his eternal Babel of the "world misunderstanding and misinterpreting his All-Highest intentions and purposes," the mistakes of Generals, who continuously disobeyed his orders and consequently lost the most important battles of the war! And the riddle, never-to-be-explained: "How his people came to abandon him?"

In pre-war days he used to offer "his fifty million Prussians to the *Gott of War* lest an enemy grab a single foot of his territory"—(he would "leave the fifty millions dead on the battle-field" for the preserva-

tion of his Empire, he boasted). As it happened, as a mass they not only refused to die for him (a little thing like dying!); they did not even attempt to form into an Echternach St. Vitus Dance procession, begging him on their bended knees to come back and rule and chastise them!

These things and others, dealing with "treachery," "base ingratitude," the "incompetency of von ———, von ——— and von ———" (who cares for the names?) he keeps droning incessantly into the ears of all persons of undoubted and thrice vowed for loyalty. It keeps him so busy, he has time for nothing else outside of eating, drinking, walking, motoring and wood-chopping.

If occasionally he decides to read the Junker Bible (*Kreuz Zeitung*) or scan clippings from other papers, German, English or French, he must steal the time from the talk-fests he inflicts upon people *ad nauseam*.

And there is his correspondence. Yes, indeed, he has some of the numerous epistles he gets read to him, in part at least,—letters from monarchists, Ebert-detractors, loyal schemers, enthusiasts and black-guards. That letters not fanning the Ex-Kaiser's vanity, or catering to his hopes for reinstatement never break through the lines of marshals and secretaries, goes without saying. And the effusions sent by German Ex-kings and Ex-kinglets fare no better.

"Dirty Dogs," snorts William, "each and every one of them would lay sacrilegious hands upon my Crown, if he dared."

However, there is one sort of letter he actually enjoys, the twenty or thirty page foolscap memos old Hindenburg addresses to him every little while! Three inch scrawls, lapidary chirography, and ditto boot-licking sentiments!

Like a silly girl who begins her novel at "Finis," to see whether there is a marriage and a baby, the Ex-Kaiser invariably turns to Hindi's last page before he

tackles the ream, and his eyes pop out with pleasure as he reads such flowery rhapsodies as:

"As Your Imperial and Royal Majesty's most loyal servant, I beg to remain with highest and deepest devotion and respect until death,

Hindenburg,"

"Field Marshal."

"Highest and deepest," the essence of loyalty! If all his hundred millions of Germans—those that escaped the killing—wrote that way (as they did write and think before the war) Kaiserdom would be safe for all time. Incidentally William's absurd love of the Hindi nonsense recalls the story of Countess Kosel, mistress of Augustus the Strong of Poland and Saxony. When Augustus broke with the lady, he stamped a certain part of her anatomy on spite-coins, and Kosel devoted the rest of her life and fortune to recovering these counterfeits from Love's Mint at exorbitant prices.

Such and similar adulation indulgence takes up *some* of the Exile's time of course, but there are twelve hours to be killed daily and listeners are getting fewer and less wasteful of their time! Now you would think the quondam Jack-of-all-trades to have his innings: William the painter, sculptor, draughtsman, machinist, play-manager; William the potter, composer, orchestra leader; the poet, devotee to the Arts, and what not? He had himself gazetted in all these characters and more while he signed "I. R." behind the William. Indeed reputed specimens of his handicraft and genius were then exhibited all over Germany and even in foreign countries. Now that he is a man of leisure and can do as he pleases with his time, no longer claimed by business, outdoor sport or travel, he might be expected to give full scope to his favorite inclinations in either

of the professions he claimed to master, but he does nothing of the kind. Instead, he hesitates not to give the lie to those All-Highest fakes of yore. Instead of playing at Master of Arts, he practically spends the days in utter boredom from morn to night.

To be sure, Ilsemann will crack puns until he is blue in the face; the Bentincks will furnish Dutch social tittle tattle galore, and the funny papers—ah, the number of available ones has sadly dwindled since the war, for every little while these sheets indulge in *lèse-majesté* most horrible, particularly our former favorite “Life” (sailing now under the head of *pfui! pfui!*)—with these diversions there are still hours and hours between meals to get rid of.

After much experimenting, accident brought at least a partial solution. The Ex-Kaiser had been harping for the hundredth time on his “spiritual German friend,” Lord Haldane; “why the English dismissed him? Why Haldane was hated and distrusted when *he*, William, considered him an able and useful man, the Ex-Kaiser couldn’t make out!”

“Indeed it *is* puzzling,” spake the obsequious Ilsemann, clicking heels under the table, “for, as Majesty demonstrated the other day, Lord Haldane is as great an Englishman as Gladstone was.”

“Gladstone,” mused the Kaiser, “let me see, wasn’t he the noodle who presented us with Heligoland? No, Salisbury did us that kindness—bless him!”

The Majesty meditated a while—his audience holding their breath—then like a flash: “What were Gladstone’s politics—does any one know?”

“May it please Majesty, Gladstone was a great woodchopper,” put in General Dommès, who seems to be the reincarnation of the soldierman that the Duke of Wellington designated, “a gaping fool,” but nevertheless recommended for a certain command in India.

“But,” objected the War Office, “only the other day you called him a fool.”

"He is a fool. He is a damn fool; in fact, he is damn fool enough for the appointment I am making," insisted His Grace.

"Woodchopping," repeated William, lingering over the word, "I'd like to try that." He turned to Bentinck. "Have you got any trees handy, Count?"

"A whole arsenal full. I was about to hire somebody to cut them up into proper lengths for the new porcelain stoves I installed. They require a certain number of inches and no more!"

Thus it came to pass that Dommes' quaint conception of English party life evolved William the woodsman. In that capacity the Ex-Kaiser has saved the Bentincks several hundred guilders in wages and also reduced his own laundry bill considerably, for he wears a woolen shirt and dispenses with a collar while at work. As he never owned more than six shirts, House Marshal Dommes enthusiastically approves of the Exile's toy. Since the war-debt-ridden Berlin Government refuses to supply orders and decorations to him (worth from three to seven marks each before the war) he constructs his own Orders of Merit out of thin, round slices of wood with the Imperial "W" in the center. The "W" he paints on with his own royal hand, and the new fangled decoration (that may be worn on a shoestring) makes excellent backsheesh, saving cash. Indeed the Hindi class professes to value the pine wood cone as highly as the old time black, red, or white eagle.

The Dutch Government treats William very well indeed; that he is allowed neither horse, nor gun on account of the proximity of the German frontier, doesn't count, for William is the last man in the world to play Richard Lion-Heart or King Murat.

Risk invasion? Not he! except, perhaps, at the tail of a million men. And even then he would probably masquerade as a baggage-car driver or an apple woman.

It tickles his vanity to receive, off and on, German down-and-out-politicians and other conspirators prom-

ising Kaiserdom's return to power, but before he risks a straw, they have to pull the chestnuts out of the fire, first, second and third.

No, big Willie won't take chances, and it *does* look as if little Willie was of the same cautious mind. Their "misguided people" will have to experience a thorough change of heart and manners, will have to kill Ebert and tear down everything smacking of the Republic, before the Anointed Ones will listen to pleas involving their return to Berlin.

That's final, and, moreover, the Ex-Kaiser's complete innocence of any wrong-doing, or mistake, before, during or after the war, must be established on the proverbial rock of bronze, while everybody, who has maligned Majesty, must suffer the extreme of *lese majeste* prosecutions. To make the latter condition perfectly clear beforehand, the Ex-Kaiser is even now, as a private citizen, going after editors and authors showing disrespect to the All-Highest person. He has put one behind bars and caused another's play to be stopped. Yes, indeed, "he will show these scribblers," who insist that he started the war for his own glory and Krupp's factory dividends.

It's one of the themes he never tires talking about: those "blasphemers of his anointed person, the Majesty answerable to *Gott* only,—scoundrels, malefactors all, who think otherwise!"

.

Since he arrived at Amerongen and later moved to House Doorn (the neighboring residence he bought) the Ex-Kaiser has never read a book or pamphlet, has never put his hand to paper except to sign letter or document, has never done writing or reading for more than five or ten minutes a day.

A few abrupt words of instruction are all a secretary gets out of him to settle the most subtle correspondence

problems. And if, perchance, he utters anything resembling continuity of thought or style, Ilseman and his underlings think themselves blest, while Dommes shouts of literary triumphs that would make Schiller and Goethe turn in their graves if they knew.

And think it over: why should Majesty suffer a stenographer or working secretary near the All-Highest elbow? Hasn't he got Professor Schiemann, Germany's late spy in Ireland, writing long articles expressive of the Imperial will and explosive of ditto achievements? The editors of the *Preussische Jahrbücher* are writing for him like mad, and Excellency von Dryander, court preacher and bore, who proved by the Bible that the Germans, and not the Jews, are the Chosen People,—Dryander will set him right with *Gott* if it takes fifty thousand words to do so. Indeed, for spouting words and inventing excuses for failure, the Schiemann-Dryander-*Jahrbücher* combination is hard to beat and the *Grentzboten* wise-acres, too, have promised some hot stuff against the English. "Perfidious Albion" is always good copy, isn't it?

And, of course, there are the Stinnes Press Cossacks, the leader writers of billionaire Stinnes' hundred or more newspapers. Stinnes wants Monarchy reëstablished, and is not "particularly particular" how it's done. Just now, he thinks he can do it with the aid of foreign industrial combinations, but if France, England and the United States refuse to fall for his blandishments, why he will try another tack. Meanwhile, his editors keep on pounding into people's minds the legend that the Republic can't last and that the return to the "Old Order" would mean plenty—food and revenge.

But what about conscience, regrets, ordinary human feelings and sentiments? Pshaw, as to the bloodshed, the woe caused, the destruction wreaked, as to the whole bloody welter, William "has nothing to upbraid himself." For, as stated over and over again, he is "responsible to *Gott* only!"

But if you really want to know who is to blame, he will deign to tell you! "The Masons, of course, the '*verdammt Masons*,' for their power in world politics is practically unlimited, and their delight in evil-doing would shame Satan."

And more often than not he will add, "I thank *Gott* daily on my bended knees that Grandmother Victoria warned me when a young man, not to join the Masons. Her own son, the Prince of Wales, did and everybody knows what sinister influence Edward the Seventh has exercised in European politics."

One wonders whether it was Edward the Mason, or Edward the King, who coined the phrase that "nephew William could never act the part of a gentleman," a remark, by the way, flatly denied by William's present valets, Dommes and Ilseemann.

Valet Dommes, as we know, is no hero to his master, but that's not his fault. Look at his receding chin and weak mouth. Ilseemann, on the other hand is a real Prince Charming. With his own heroic fingers he crushed to death a bed-bug walking up the sleeve of the late Empress's gown, when the Majesties were on a visit to Abdul Hamid, the Damned, at Yieldiz Kiosk, Constantinople.

But of late it has developed that both, Valet Dommes and Valet Ilseemann, have been talking too much. Their "*pfui pfui Ebert*" has been heard in Berlin and "disloyal," that is democratic-republican papers (the sort *not* owned by Stinnes, of course) are base enough to hint that some of the wires that directed the Ertzberger-Rathenau assassinations may have been pulled by personages accustomed to decree murders on colossal scales. No proofs, of course, nothing tangible, but, as said before, the ex-Kaiser isn't taking any chances. Of course, he is glad to know that most of the machine guns, rifles and ammunition secreted from the Allied Commissions, are stored on the vast estates of his friends, the German nobles, who are

also hoarding provisions for the monarchist-army of the future.

That army, of course, will be commanded by Ludendorff, even if old Hindenburg is the nominal generalissimo, but until that comes to pass Ludendorff will continue to talk Bolshevism.

Jolly dinner parties at Doorn when the London papers print Ludendorff's Bolshevism bugbears!

In the interim, the Stinnes papers and others that can be hired or fooled, both in Germany and the United States, are setting up new William legends. To them he's no longer the *Ex*, and "House Doorn" is no longer a mere "house." It's the *Castle*, where the *Kaiser* deigns to dwell during "his temporary absence from his States."

Inside the Castle, carpets and wall-paper are not blue, or yellow, according to these flatterers, but "Kaiser-blue" and "Imperial-yellow." And Majesty's Chapel Royal boasts a "throne," a silver-gilt chair upholstered in red velvet, set quite apart a few feet from the altar, then a ten foot space. Follow upholstered chairs for the "nobility." More space and wooden benches for "mere servants."

When the Kaiser (not the Ex-Kaiser, mind you) is graciously pleased to visit the Chapel Royal, he enters with the same aplomb and ceremony that distinguished his visits to the Amerongen dining-room. And of course everybody stands at attention until he sits on the throne, and unless he approves of the sermon by shaking the parson by the hand at its conclusion, everybody thinks the Reverend gentleman a duffer.

But, strange to say, all this excess of adulation heaped upon the "*Ex*" by the Stinnes editors, the leading spirits of the great Monthlies and Quarterlies mentioned and by loyal "hacks" of publishers, such as Paul List, Leipzig, and others, has not yielded a single remarkable saying on William's part, not a word or phrase to be remembered even for a day. Think

of those "Echoes from St. Helena," that went thundering down the ages.

Napoleon the Great, living in a hovel on a rat-infested island, reviewing his own life calmly, philosophically, never losing the grand air.

And William the Little in his Dutch "Castle," surrounded by every luxury, employing press-agents by the hundreds. And never a syllable worth putting down on paper.

Mark well the difference.

THE END.

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Behind the scenes with the
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